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GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT:—
A. F. KIRKPATRICK, D.D.
DEAN OF ELY

THE SECOND
BOOK OF THE KINGS

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THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS

In the Revised Version

With Introduction and Notes

by

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PREFACE

BY THE

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A. F. KIRKPATRICK.

CAMBRIDGE.

11/15/78 C.U.B.S.

WHO THROUGH FAITH

SUBDUED KINGDOMS,

WROUGHT RIGHTEOUSNESS,

OBTAINED PROMISES.

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MY WORDS AND MY STATUTES WHICH I COMMANDED MY SERVANTS THE PROPHETS, DID THEY NOT OVERTAKE YOUR FATHERS?

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. The Name, and Division into Two Books.

The name *Kings* is a translation of *Mĕlāchīm*, the title prefixed to the book in the printed editions of the Hebrew Bible. The title is however far older than the age of the invention of printing, being found in the Talmud (Baba Bathra 15 a), and in Jerome's *Prologus Galeatus* (prefixed to editions of the Vulgate). The Christian Father in agreement with the Hebrew reckoning specifies Kings as the fourth of the Prophetical books, the first being Joshua. He writes:—

'The fourth book is called among the Jews *Malachim*, that is, "Kings," and is contained in the third and fourth volumes of the work we call "Kingdoms." It is much better to call it *Malachim*, "Kings," than *Malachoth*, "Kingdoms," for it does not describe the kingdoms of a number of nations, but that of the Israelite people alone, of one people indeed composed of twelve tribes.'

The title *Kingdoms* which Jerome here rejects is derived from the Septuagint. The Greek translators taking into account the community of subject reckoned Samuel and Kings as one work divided into four books, and gave it the title of Βασιλειῶν τέσσαρα, i.e. the four books of Kingdoms. This was the title best known to the Greek Fathers of the first Four Centuries, e.g. to Melito of Sardis (Euseb. *H.E.* IV. 26), Origen (apud Euseb. *H.E.* VI. 25), Cyril of Jerusalem (*Catech.* IV., 35), Athanasius (*Epist. Heortast.* XXXIX.). The Latin form *Regnorum quattuor libri* is found in Rufinus (*in Symbolum*), in Augustine, in the Canon Mommsenianus, and in the Catalogue of Books found in the Codex Claromontanus[1].

[1] Zahn, *Geschichte des NTlichen Kanons*, II. pp. 144, 158, 178, 240 ff.

The Vulgate occupies a middle position between the Hebrew and LXX., and reckons Samuel and Kings together as the four books of Kings (*Regum*). The Peshitta speaks with an uncertain voice. Both titles, Kings and Kingdoms, are found in the best MSS., both Jacobite and Nestorian, sometimes side by side, sometimes in different parts of the same MS. The editions reflect this confusion.

There can be no doubt that the title of the book was not settled at the time when the great versions were made. Some Hebrew MSS. offer no title at all from the hand of the original scribe; nothing but a blank space of three or four lines marks the transition from Samuel to Kings[1].

On the other hand it is probable that the first word of the book (*wĕhammelech* 'And king') was sometimes used as a title. A Hebrew MS.[2] of the twelfth or thirteenth century, which has no other title and no head-lines for Kings, exhibits this word standing by itself in the middle of a line to serve as the name of the Book. Similarly it appears that Origen[3] considered the Hebrew title of Kings to be *wĕhammelech David*, 'And king David.' The book had originally no separate title among the Jews; like Genesis which the Jews called *Bĕrēshīth*, 'In the beginning,' it was sometimes cited by its opening word.

The division of Kings into two books after 1 K. xxii. 53 is quite arbitrary; there is no pause in the history, and the reign of Ahaziah is divided in half without any justification. In Hebrew MSS. the first verse of 2 Kings follows the last verse of 1 Kings with no mark beyond the ordinary verse division[4]. The division into books is due to the Septuagint, whence no doubt it passed over into the Vulgate, and into printed Bibles generally. The MSS. of the Peshitta take no notice of this division, but they introduce two sub-divisions of their own. The

[1] Camb. Univ. Libr. Add. 465 (cent. XII—XIII.) and 468 (cent. XIII—XIV.). In each of these MSS. there is a headline (מלכים, KINGS) from a later hand.

[2] Camb. Univ. Libr. Add. 467 (French Ashkenazic).

[3] Apud Euseb. *H. E.* VI. 25.

[4] See Camb. Univ. Libr. Add. 465, 467, 468 and Mm. 5. 27. In the first of these a later Scribe has noted the division in the margin.

section 1 K. xvii. 1—2 K. ii. 18 is entitled 'Elijah,' and the following section (2 K. ii. 19—xiii. 21) 'Elisha.' These subdivisions rightly call attention to the prominence of prophetical narratives in Kings.

§ 2. Contents.

The book of Kings gives the history of Israel from the last days of David to the Babylonian Captivity, or, strictly speaking, to the reign of Evil-Merodach (Amil-Marduk) king of Babylon, 561—559 B.C.

In the following summary Table of Contents the reader should notice *first*, the distribution of the narrative between the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and *secondly*, the prominence of narratives concerning the prophets.

A.	1 Kings i—xi.	The Undivided Kingdom. The last days of David and the reign of Solomon.
B.	xii.	The Schism.
C.	xiii. 1—xiv. 20.	Israel. Jeroboam and the Prophets.
D.	xiv. 21—xv. 24.	Judah. From Rehoboam to Asa.
E.	xv. 25—xvi. 34.	Israel. From Nadab to Ahab. Assassinations and Insurrections.
F.	xvii. 1—xxii. 40.	Israel. Elijah and Ahab; Ahab, Syria, and the Prophets.
G.	xxii. 41—50.	Judah. Jehoshaphat.
H.	1 Kings xxii. 51—2 Kings viii. 15.	Israel. The last acts of Elijah; the acts of Elisha. Wars with Moab and Syria.
I.	2 Kings viii. 16—29.	Judah. Joram; Ahaziah.
J.	ix, x.	Israel. Jehu destroys the house of Ahab and puts down Baal-worship.
K.	xi, xii.	Judah. (From a Temple Chronicle?) Athaliah overthrown by the high priest; the Temple repaired by Joash.
L.	xiii.	Israel. Jehoahaz; Joash; Syrian Wars. The last acts of Elisha.
M.	xiv. 1—22.	Judah. Amaziah.
N.	23—29.	Israel. The might of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

O. 2 Kings xv. 1—7. JUDAH. Azariah (Uzziah).
P. 8—31. ISRAEL. Zechariah to Pekah. Assassinations and Insurrections.
Q. 32—xvi. 20. JUDAH. Jotham; Ahaz.
R. xvii. ISRAEL. Hoshea; the fall of the Kingdom.
S. xviii—xxv. JUDAH. The last Kings: Hezekiah to Zedekiah.

A more detailed analysis gives the following result.

A. 1 Kings i—xi. THE UNDIVIDED KINGDOM.
i. 1—4. David's old age.
5—49. Adonijah's conspiracy defeated by Nathan the prophet.
50—53. Adonijah submits to Solomon.
ii. 1—11. David's testament and death.
12—25. Adonijah put to death.
26, 27. Abiathar deposed from the priesthood.
28—35. Joab put to death.
36—46. Shimei put to death.
iii. 1—3. Solomon at the beginning of his reign.
4—15 (cp. 2 Chron. i. 3—13). Solomon's prayer for wisdom.
16—28. An illustration of Solomon's wisdom.
iv. 1—20. Solomon's Officers.
21—28. His greatness.
29—34. His wisdom.
v. 1—12 (=2 Chron. ii. 3—16). His treaty with Hiram of Tyre.
13—18 (cp. ix. 20—23; 2 Chron. ii. 17, 18). His workmen.
vi. 1—13 (cp. 2 Chron. iii. 1—4). Solomon builds the Temple.
14—38 (cp. 2 Chron. iii. 5—13). Description of the Temple and its ornaments.
vii. 1—12. Solomon's other buildings.
13—47 (cp. 2 Chron. iii. 17; iv. 2—18). The brasen pillars and the brasen vessels of the Temple.
48—51 (cp. 2 Chron. iv. 19—v. 1). The golden vessels of the Temple.
viii. 1—11 (cp. 2 Chron. v. 2—14). Dedication of the Temple.

1 Kings viii. 12—21 (cp. 2 Chron. vi. 1—11). Solomon's Thanksgiving.
22—53 (cp. 2 Chron. vi. 12—39). Solomon's Prayer of Consecration.
54—61. Solomon's Blessing.
62—66 (cp. 2 Chron. vii. 4—10). The final rejoicings.

ix. 1—9 (cp. 2 Chron. vii. 11—22). Solomon's second vision.
10—14 (cp. 2 Chron. viii. 1, 2). The cities of the land of Cabul.
15—25 (cp. v. 13—18; 2 Chron. viii. 4—13). Solomon's cities; his levy; his three yearly feasts.
26—28 (=2 Chron. viii. 17, 18). Voyages for gold.

x. 1—13 (cp. 2 Chron. ix. 1—12). The visit of the queen of Sheba.
14—29 (cp. 2 Chron. ix. 13—28). The magnificence of Solomon.

xi. 1—8. Solomon's many wives; his idolatry.
9—25. God's wrath; Solomon's adversaries.
26—43. The rise of Jeroboam; death of Solomon.

B. xii. THE SCHISM.

1—20 (cp. 2 Chron. x. 1—19). Rehoboam's harsh answer to the Northern tribes; the tribes revolt.
21—24 (cp. 2 Chron. xi. 1—4). Shemaiah forbids civil war.
25—33. Jeroboam takes measures to break all intercourse between Israel and Judah.

C. xiii. 1—xiv. 20. ISRAEL. Jeroboam and the Prophets.

xiii. 1—10. A prophet from Judah prophesies against the altar at Beth-el.
11—32. The fate of the prophet from Judah.
33, 34. Jeroboam unmoved.

xiv. 1—20. Ahijah announces the death of the son of Jeroboam.

D. xiv. 21—xv. 24. JUDAH.

xiv. 21—31 (cp. 2 Chron. xi. 5—xii. 16). Rehoboam.
xv. 1—8 (cp. 2 Chron. xiii. 1—xiv. 1). Abijam (Abijah).
9—24 (cp. 2 Chron. xiv. 2, 3; xv. 16—xvi. 6; 11—14). Asa.

E. 1 Kings xv. 25—xvi. 34. ISRAEL.

xv. 25—32. Nadab.
xv. 33—xvi. 7. Baasha.
xvi. 8—14. Elah.
15—20. Zimri.
21—28. Omri. Foundation of Samaria.
29—34. Ahab.

F. xvii. 1—xxii. 40. ISRAEL.

xvii. 1—7. Elijah and the drought.
8—24. The Widow of Zarephath.
xviii. Elijah and the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel.
xix. The Flight of Elijah; the Call of Elisha.
xx. 1—22. Ahab and the unnamed prophet; victory over the Syrians at Samaria.
23—43. An unnamed king and an unnamed prophet; victory over the Syrians at Aphek.
xxi. 1—16. Naboth and Ahab.
17—29. Elijah and Ahab.
xxii. 1—28 (cp. 2 Chron. xviii. 2—27). Micaiah and Ahab.
29—40 (cp. 2 Chron. xviii. 28—34). The death of Ahab at Ramoth-gilead.

G. xxii. 41—50 (cp. 2 Chron. xx. 31—xxi. 1). JUDAH. Jehoshaphat.

H. 1 Kings xxii. 51—2 Kings viii. 15. ISRAEL.

1 Kings xxii. 51—2 Kings i. 18. Ahaziah and Elijah.
2 Kings ii. 1—18. The translation of Elijah.
19—25. Two early miracles of Elisha.
iii. Elisha and Jehoram; the Moabite war.
iv. 1—7. Elisha's miracle of the oil.
8—37. Elisha raises to life the son of the Shunammite.
38—41. Heals the poisonous dish.
42—44. Multiplies the loaves.
v. 1—19. Heals Naaman of leprosy.
20—27. Punishes Gehazi with leprosy.
vi. 1—7. Recovers the lost axe-head.
8—23. Leads captive a host of Syrians.
vi. 24—vii. 2. Predicts plenty at the siege of Samaria.

2 Kings vii. 3—20. The prediction fulfilled.
viii. 1—6. Elisha's miracles reported to the king of Israel.
7—15. Elisha at Damascus.

I. 16—29. JUDAH.
16—24 (cp. 2 Chron. xxi. 5—10, 20). Joram (Jehoram).
25—29 (cp. 2 Chron. xxii. 1—6). Ahaziah.

J. ix, x. ISRAEL.
ix. 1—10. Elisha causes Jehu to be anointed king.
11—29 (cp. 2 Chron. xxii. 7—9). Jehu assassinates Joram and causes Ahaziah of Judah to be slain.
30—37. Jezebel murdered.
x. 1—14 (cp. 2 Chron. xxii. 7—9). The sons of Ahab and the brethren of Ahaziah of Judah put to death.
15—28. Massacre of the worshippers of Baal.
29—31. Jehu maintains the calf-worship.
32—36. The Syrians begin to afflict Israel.

K. xi, xii. JUDAH.
xi. 1—3 (cp. 2 Chron. xxii. 10—12). Athaliah seizes the throne.
4—16 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiii. 1—15). Jehoiada the priest overthrows Athaliah, and makes Joash king.
17—20 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiii. 16—21). Jehoiada re-establishes the sole worship of JEHOVAH in Judah.
xii. 1—3 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiv. 1, 2). The character of the reign of Jehoash (Joash).
4—16 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiv. 4—14). The king repairs the Temple.
17, 18 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiv. 23, 24). Jehoash surrenders the Temple treasure to the Syrians.
19—21 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiv. 25—27). Jehoash assassinated.

L. xiii. ISRAEL.
1—9. Jehoahaz. The oppression of Israel by the Syrians.
10—13. Joash (Jehoash).

2 Kings xiii. 14—19. Elisha on his death-bed predicts victory over Syria.
20, 21. A miracle wrought by the bones of Elisha.
22—25. Victories of Joash over Syria.

M. xiv. 1—22. JUDAH.

1—7 (cp. 2 Chron. xxv. 1—4, 11). Reign of Amaziah; his victory over Edom.
8—16 (cp. 2 Chron. xxv. 17—24). Amaziah defeated and Jerusalem captured by Jehoash of Israel.
17—22 (cp. 2 Chron. xxv. 25—xxvi. 2). Amaziah murdered; Azariah (Uzziah) made king.

N. xiv. 23—29. ISRAEL. The might of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

O. xv. 1—7 (cp. 2 Chron. xxvi. 3, 4; 21—23). JUDAH. Azariah (Uzziah).

P. xv. 8—31. ISRAEL.

8—12. Zechariah assassinated by Shallum.
13—16. Shallum slain by Menahem.
17—22. Reign of Menahem.
23—26. Pekahiah assassinated by Pekah.
27—31. Reign of Pekah. First Assyrian Captivity.

Q. xv. 32—xvi. 20. JUDAH.

xv. 32—38 (cp. 2 Chron. xxvii. 1—3; 7—9). Jotham.
xvi. 1—9 (cp. 2 Chron. xxviii. 1—5; 20, 21). Ahaz; submission to Assyria.
10—20 (cp. 2 Chron. xxviii. 22—24; 26, 27). Ahaz makes religious innovations; his death.

R. xvii. ISRAEL.

1—6 (cp. xviii. 9—12). Reign of Hoshea. Second Assyrian Captivity.
7—23. The sins of Israel (and Judah).
24—41. The introduction of a mixed population and mixed worship into Samaria.

8. 2 Kings xviii—xxv. JUDAH.

xviii. 1—8 (cp. 2 Chron. xxix. 1, 2). The prosperity of Hezekiah.
9—12 (cp. xvii. 5, 6). Samaria led captive by the Assyrians.
13—16. Hezekiah submits and pays tribute to Sennacherib.
17—37 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 9—19). Sennacherib sends the rab-shakeh to terrify Jerusalem into surrender.
xix. 1—7 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 20). Hezekiah and Isaiah.
8—19. Hezekiah receives a threatening letter from Sennacherib, and prays over it in the Temple.
20—34. Isaiah sends a comforting message to Hezekiah.
35—37 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 21). The Assyrian army perishes; Sennacherib is assassinated.
xx. 1—11 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 24). The sign given by Isaiah to Hezekiah in his sickness.
12—21 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 31). Isaiah rebukes Hezekiah for his reception of the ambassadors from Babylon.
xxi. 1—18 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1—10; 18—20). The reign of Manasseh. Destruction of Jerusalem threatened.
19—26 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 21—25). The reign of Amon.
xxii. 1, 2 (=2 Chron. xxxiv. 1, 2). The reign of Josiah.
3—11 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8—19). Repair of the Temple; the book of the law found.
12—20 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 20—28). The king consults Huldah the prophetess.
xxiii. 1—3 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 29—32). The public reading of the book of the law; the renewal of the Covenant.
4—14 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3—5). Jerusalem and its neighbourhood cleansed from the symbols of idolatry.
15—20 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 7; 33). High places destroyed at Beth-el and in the cities of Samaria.

2 Kings xxiii. 21—23 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxv. 1—19). Josiah's great passover.

24—27. Nothing avails to avert the doom of Jerusalem.

28—30 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxv. 20—27). The death of Josiah at Megiddo.

31—35 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1—4). Jehoahaz carried captive by Pharaoh-necoh.

xxiii. 36—xxiv. 7 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5—8). Jehoiakim.

xxiv. 8—17 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, 10). Jehoiachin. First Chaldean Captivity.

xxiv. 18—xxv. 7 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11—13; Jer. xxxix. 1—7; lii. 1—11). Zedekiah the last king. Jerusalem taken by the Chaldeans.

xxv. 8—12 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19; Jer. xxxix. 8—10; lii. 12—16). Nebuzaradan's work of destruction and spoliation.

13—17 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18; Jer. lii. 17—23). The brasen vessels carried off.

18—21 (cp. Jer. lii. 24—27). Execution of Jewish officers.

22—26 (cp. Jer. xl. 5—xli. 3; xliii. 5—7). Gedaliah appointed governor and presently murdered. The remnant of the Jews flee into Egypt.

27—30 (cp. Jer. lii. 31—34). Evil-merodach king of Babylon shews favour to the captive Jehoiachin.

§ 3. Structure and Sources; Date and Author.

Appeal is made throughout the book of Kings to certain records as authorities containing fuller accounts of the reigns described. In the case of Solomon the record is called 'the book of the acts of Solomon' (LXX. *βιβλίον ῥημάτων* **Σ**., Vulgate, *liber uerborum dierum Salomonis*, 1 K. xi. 41). After the division of the Kingdom appeal is made for the kings of the Northern tribes to 'the book of the chronicles (lit. "acts of the days") of the kings of Israel' (LXX. *βιβλίον λόγων τῶν ἡμερῶν τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν Ἰσραήλ*, Vulgate, *liber sermonum—uerborum—dierum*

regum Israel) while for the Southern reigns 'the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah' is cited[1].

A difference can be easily seen between the sections in which appeal is made to the chronicles and those in which no appeal is made. The former consist of brief notices written in the style of annals. Even important occurrences are only barely mentioned, and reflexions are brief, or absent altogether. These sections constitute the framework of the history. On the other hand, where no appeal is made to the chronicles, the sections are in many cases made up of narratives or groups of narratives, which are detailed and picturesque. (Compare, e.g. the annalistic section 1 K. xiv. 21—xvi. 34 with the group of picturesque narratives given in xvii. 1—xxii. 28, or again 2 K. xxiii. 31—xxv. 7 with xviii. 17—xix. 34.)

Further there are other sections, some of considerable length, others consisting of a verse or two only, which are written in the style of the book of Deuteronomy, and have the character rather of comment than of narrative. In some cases they shew clearly that they are written from the standpoint of the Deuteronomist; they condemn all worship which is not offered at the one chosen sanctuary (the temple at Jerusalem), even if it is offered to JEHOVAH. See, for example, 1 K. xv. 14; xxii. 43; 2 K. xvii. 7—23. To this class must be added such passages as 1 K. viii. 22 ff.; ix. 1—9, which are not pure narrative, which also in their present form shew traces of the influence of the language and teaching of Deuteronomy.

But different sections of Kings are distinguished not only by difference of style and of standpoint, but also by difference of statement. Such a passage as 1 K. ix. 15, 20—23 (note especially *v.* 22) differs considerably in statement from v. 13—16; and iv. 21—24 (the perfect quiet of Solomon's reign) differs similarly from xi. 14—40 (the adversaries whom Solomon had to contend with throughout his reign). Some passages again stand in a perplexing relation to one another, and yet no explanation is given; e.g. in 1 K. xix. 15—17 Elijah is

[1] No appeal is made in the case of Athaliah (queen), Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah of Judah, nor in the case of Joram and Hoshea of Israel. These omissions were perhaps not without reason.

commissioned during the reign of Ahab to anoint Hazael and Jehu as kings over Syria and Israel, and to anoint Elisha as his own successor; in 2 K. viii. 7—15; ix. 1—3, however, it is Elisha at whose word Hazael seizes the crown in Syria, and Jehu is anointed in Israel, some fourteen years at least after Elijah received his commission. Nothing is said in explanation of the delay, or of the transference of the task from Elijah to Elisha.

It is obvious from these and similar facts that the book of Kings cannot have been composed *aus einem Guss*, 'at one casting[1],' to use the German phrase. The book is not of one quality throughout; earlier work has been adopted by a later author, and placed side by side with his own with little or no re-writing; similarly separate quotations from his authorities are placed in juxtaposition without the addition of clauses to explain the relation of one to another. Indications of 'Sources' obtrude themselves upon the reader's notice. Thus in 1 K. xxii. 41—50 the author after referring in *v.* 45 to the chronicles of the kings of Judah for 'the rest' of the acts of Jehoshaphat, gives a fresh quotation from the chronicles in *vv.* 46—49. In 2 K. xiii. the writer after giving an account of Jehoash (Joash) from the chronicles of the kings of Israel in *vv.* 10—13, including the king's death and burial, returns in *vv.* 14—19, 22—25 to give an account of Joash's visit to the death-bed of Elisha and his subsequent victories over Syria. In 2 K. xviii. 16, 17 the connexion between the two accounts is left unexplained; Hezekiah makes, as it seems, a full submission to the king of Assyria, *and* the king of Assyria sends a great host against Jerusalem. The sequence of the two events is left untold. Some scholars think that the order is inverted; others suppose that an interval of some years intervened between the event of *v.* 16 and that of *v.* 17. The uncertainty is due to the structure of the book; the author has made two extracts from his authorities, without stopping to supply the link which should bind them together.

We have then in Kings:

(1) Brief summaries of the reigns of all the kings forming the framework of the whole book. These were taken from 'the

[1] A metaphor taken from foundry-work.

chronicles of the kings of Israel' (or 'of Judah') by the compiler whom we may call 'the author' of Kings. A good instance of such a summary is 2 K. xv. 1, 2, 5—7.

(2) Full narratives of particular incidents of some reigns, particularly of those incidents which called forth prophetical activity. These are probably taken from Lives of the Prophets. Instances of such narratives are found in 1 K. xiii. 1—32; xiv. 1—18; xviii. 1—46.

(3) Passages written in the style of the book of Deuteronomy, and from the standpoint of the Deuteronomist. Of these some pass judgement on the conduct of the kings, chiefly as regards worship. Others trace a connexion between the sins of the people and the calamities which befel them. Others again record at length matters regarding the worship of the Temple. Such a passage is 1 K. viii. 23—53 in which Solomon's prayer at the Dedication of the Temple is given in a form in which (it is clear) it has been influenced by the language and thought of Deuteronomy. These passages appear to come from the compiler, who drew up the brief summaries mentioned above.

DATE AND AUTHOR. Indications are not wanting as to the date at which the various extracts from early documents were put together, and the compiler completed this mosaic-work by adding passages which he had either written or re-written himself. The brief notices drawn from the chronicles of the kings of Israel and of Judah, which form the compiler's framework for the book, come down as far as the reign of Zedekiah, the last king, and there cease. The last event recorded is the advancement of Jehoiachin, Zedekiah's nephew and predecessor, after an imprisonment of thirty-seven years in Babylon. This event happened in 561 B.C. The *terminus a quo* is indicated fairly well by this year. Kings cannot have been compiled before circ. 561 B.C.

But on the other hand it is improbable that the book was compiled any long time after 561 B.C. The compiler stands in a definite relation to the book of Deuteronomy. Now Deuteronomy was published in the eighteenth year of Josiah (=621 B.C.). The event made a deep impression, and for some

years to come this book was the Law for the party in Judah which was faithful to JEHOVAH. The compiler of Kings writes as one who is still moved by the religious impulse given by the book of Deuteronomy. When he refers to 'the Law' or 'the Law of Moses' it is generally clear that his reference is to Deuteronomy, and not to the Pentateuch in general[1]. Moreover the language of Kings is coloured by the language of Deuteronomy[2]. The *terminus ad quem* is to be sought for not much later than 561 B.C., for towards the end of the exile a fresh movement (inaugurated perhaps by Ezekiel) began, which issued in the writing and publication of the Priestly Code, by which the special legislation of Deuteronomy was thrown into the background. The compiler of Kings probably lived not later than the second half of the sixth century B.C.

A Talmudic tradition (Baba Bathra 15 a) says, 'Jeremiah wrote his own book and the book of Kings (*Mĕlāchim*) and Lamentations (*Ḳīnōth*).' But the tradition is post-Christian, i.e. it is more than 600 years later than the life-time of Jeremiah, and the internal evidence in its favour when carefully examined turns out to be almost insignificant. The coincidences of language between Kings and Jeremiah, though interesting[3], are quite insufficient to prove that Jeremiah the prophet wrote both books. Even the fact that the historical passage, 2 K. xxiv. 18—xxv. 21, is practically identical with Jer. lii. 1—27 does not prove that the two books are both due to Jeremiah, for it is very improbable that the historical sections of the book of Jeremiah were written by the prophet himself[4]. Jeremiah began to prophesy in 626 B.C., and was probably dead by 561 B.C.

It is necessary therefore to conclude that the author of the book of Kings is unknown. He wrote in captivity, not in

[1] Cp. 1 K. ii. 3, 4 (Deut. xi. 1); vi. 11—13 (Deut. viii. 6); ix. 3 (Deut. xii. 5); 2 K. xiv. 6 (Deut. xxiv. 16).

[2] See notes on 1 K. ii. 2—4; viii. 22—53; 2 K. xvii. 7—23; and cp. Driver, *Literature of the Old Testament*, ed. VII, pp. 200, 201.

[3] See Driver, *Literature of the Old Testament*, ed. VII, page 203.

[4] Cp. the similar case of the practical identity of 2 K. xviii. 13, 17—xx. 19 with Isa. xxxvi. 1—xxxviii. 8; 21, 22; xxxix. 1—8.

his own land, if, that is, we may attribute to him the notice in 1 K. iv. 24 (v. 4, Heb.) that Solomon 'had dominion over all the region *beyond the River*' (R.V. marg.) i.e. over all the country west of the Euphrates. But finally it must be said that it is not improbable that a few additions (e.g. 1 K. xiv. 1—20) were made to the text and some re-arrangement of the text was effected after the author (compiler) had completed his work. See § 4.

§ 4. Two Recensions of the Text.

A comparison of the Septuagint with the Hebrew text of 1 Kings seems to suggest that the first half of the book of Kings was subjected to some further editorial revision after the days of the compiler or author. LXX. as represented by its earliest MS., the Codex Vaticanus, presents a text which differs a good deal, chiefly in arrangement, from our present Hebrew text. After 1 K. ii. 35 (Heb. and E. V.) LXX. has fourteen additional verses, and after *v.* 46*a* eleven additional verses. These passages do not contain any matter not found in some part or other of the Hebrew text, but the grouping of the verses and their position in ch. ii. is peculiar to LXX. In LXX. again iii. 1 is missing from its place according to the Hebrew, being found in company with ix. 16 immediately before v. 1. After v. 16 (30 Heb.) LXX. presents the following arrangement of the text:

v. 18*b*.[1] and they prepared the stones and the timber *three years* (Heb., to build the house).

vi. 1. And it came to pass in the four hundred and *fortieth* (Heb., eightieth) year of the Exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt, in the fourth year...in the second month of Solomon's reign over Israel,...

v. 17. ...that they took (καὶ ἄϊρουσιν) great costly stones for the foundation of the house and *unhewn* (Heb., wrought) stone; 18*a*. and the *sons* (Heb., builders) of Solomon and the *sons* (Heb., builders) of Hiram hewed them, *and laid them* (Heb., and the Gebalites).

vi. 37. In the fourth year he founded the house of the

[1] The numbering of chapter and verse is according to the Hebrew.

LORD, in the month *Nisan* (Heb., Ziv) *and* (or *even*) *in the second month* (Heb. omits these words).

38. In the eleventh year in the month *Baad* (Heb., Bul) —this is the eighth month—the house was finished.

The account is then continued with vi. 2.

Ch. vii. 1—12 appears in LXX. at the close of ch. vii., and viii. 12, 13 after viii. 53. After xii. 24 LXX. has twenty-three additional verses which coincide with parts of ch. xi. and of xiv. 1—3, and give an account of Jeroboam and of the revolt of the Ten Tribes. On the other hand in LXX. there is no mention of Jeroboam in ch. xii. until *v.* 15, and xiv. 1—20 is wanting. After 1 K. xvi. 28 there are in LXX. nine additional verses, taken from xxii. 42—44, 46—51 (Heb.) with slight variations. On the other hand in ch. xxii. *vv.* 46—49 are wanting. Lastly chs. xx., xxi. are transposed in LXX. so that the account of the acts of Elijah in xvii.—xix., xxi. is continuous, and the account of the Syrian wars xx., xxii. is uninterrupted.

These differences are certainly striking. Some of them indeed seem to be due to the fact that the Greek translators in the course of their work felt themselves at liberty to rearrange the text which lay before them. Others however testify, it seems, to the existence of a Hebrew text which differed from the Massoretic recension. Thus the occurrence of 1 K. xxii. 42—51 (or the equivalent) in two places in the LXX. text suggests that the older Hebrew MSS. varied as to the place assigned to this passage, and that the transcribers 'harmonised' their authorities by giving the passage in both places. Of this LXX. text it cannot be said that it is better as a whole than its rival, for it shews traces of similar corruption, but some knowledge of it is necessary for a thorough study of Kings. It is indeed probable that LXX. preserves a few readings which are superior to the Massoretic.

§ 5. Chronology.

For the purposes of chronology the history of the Kings falls into four periods. The first reaches to the death of Solomon; the second extends from the Disruption to the Accession of Jehu; the third from Jehu to the Fall of Samaria; the fourth embraces the hundred and thirty years during which the Jewish kingdom survived its sister kingdom.

The Hebrews possessed no era from which to number years and so date all events by reference to one standard. It is true that in 1 K. vi. 1 the foundation of Solomon's Temple is assigned to the year 480 of the Exodus from Egypt. If the accessions of kings and other great events had been dated in the same way, there would have been an 'era of the Exodus,' and a real scheme of chronology for the book of Kings would have been supplied by the author of the book. But it is not so. No other event is dated by a reference to the Exodus. Even in 1 K. vi. 1 we do not seem to have a 'date' in our sense of the word, but only a very rough indication of the passage of time. 480 years represent most probably twelve 'generations' of 40 years each.

The Hebrew historian therefore having no era, gives his 'dates' in the two remaining periods by the use of internal synchronisms. From the time of the Disruption two dynasties were reigning in the land of Israel, and it became possible to construct a system of comparative dates. Rehoboam and Jeroboam became kings probably within a few months of one another, but Rehoboam predeceased his rival, and the author of Kings accordingly dates the accession of Rehoboam's two successors by the regnal years of Jeroboam. Thus Abijam succeeded to the throne of Judah in the 18th year of Jeroboam (1 K. xv. 1), and Asa in the 20th year of the Israelite king (*v.* 9). Jeroboam predeceased Asa, and accordingly the accession of Jeroboam's successor in Israel is dated in turn by the regnal year of the king of Judah. And so the cumbrous system is continued. Accessions of kings of Judah are dated by the regnal years of kings of Israel, and accessions of kings of Israel by the regnal years of kings of Judah. It is a system which readily lends itself to confusion and mistake. From

2 K. xxi. 1 onward, owing to the destruction of the Northern kingdom, the system breaks down.

For the second period however these synchronisms seem to yield a settled result. From the disruption to the accession of Jehu the two sets of statements of the editor of Kings regarding the two kingdoms are, broadly speaking, in agreement with one another. If we add together the years ascribed to the kings of Judah from Rehoboam to Ahaziah inclusive, the total reaches 95 years. If we add together in like manner the years of the contemporary kings of Israel, the total reaches 98 years. The small discrepancy of *three* years may be removed altogether (1) if we assume that the editor regarded Jeroboam as having commenced his reign over Israel 'a year' before Rehoboam began his reign of seventeen years 'in Jerusalem' (1 K. xiv. 21); (2) if we subtract *two* years from the Israelite total, on the ground that, as there were eight Israelite kings to six Jewish, the inclusive reckoning of years comes twice oftener into the Israelite total than into the Jewish. Thus the chronological scheme for this period is sufficiently consistent with itself to offer no definite ground for suspecting the accuracy of the reckoning that 95 or 96 years elapsed between the Disruption of the kingdom and the fall of the house of Ahab. One source of doubt however remains; there may have been co-regencies or a co-regency during this period. If so the apparent agreement of the additions loses the value attributed to it.

For the third period however the synchronisms are often uncertain, and towards the end of the period full of difficulty. Unlike those of the second period, they do not pass the test of addition. The regnal years of the sovereigns of Judah, from Athaliah to the sixth year of Hezekiah, added together reach the total of 165. The years assigned to the kings of Israel for the same period, i.e. from Jehu to the ninth year of Hoshea (2 K. xviii. 10), amount to 143 years 7 months. If this discrepancy were the only difficulty, we might accept the hypothesis which has been put forward that for a period, or periods, extending over 21 years, anarchy existed in the Northern kingdom. There is however no direct evidence in favour of such a hypothesis, and it is to be rejected in view of the fact that other difficulties are to be found in the

chronological statements which belong to this period. See the notes on 2 K. xiii. 10; xv. 1, 8; xvii. 1.

In the face of these difficulties it is impossible to construct a system of chronology for the book of Kings based solely upon the statements of the book itself. The majority of these statements may be correct, but as long as we confine our attention to these alone, we do not know when we are standing on firm ground. It is necessary to seek for chronological evidence outside the Old Testament.

The first piece of such evidence is afforded by the mention of the Egyptian king Shishak (Sheshonk I) in 1 K. xi. 40 as contemporary with Solomon, and in xiv. 25 as contemporary with Rehoboam. Sheshonk I became king in 952 B.C. ('earliest possible date,' Flinders Petrie) or 'about 945 B.C.' (Breasted). His reign lasted till 'about 920 B.C.' (Breasted; similarly Flinders Petrie). We may therefore say with some confidence that the year 950 B.C. fell within the reign of Solomon.

For a later period more definite as well as more frequent help is given by the Assyrian monuments. The Assyrians had officers annually appointed like the Roman consuls, who gave their names to the years for which they were chosen. A long list of years thus named, called the *Eponym Canon*, is preserved, and one of the various entries made in the margin, the notice of an eclipse of the sun, enables us to turn the whole list into years B.C. From Assyrian sources we derive the following dates:

854 B.C. Ahab fights against the Assyrians at the battle of Karkar (not mentioned in the Old Testament).
842 B.C. Jehu pays tribute to Assyria.
[763 B.C. Eclipse of the sun.]
738 B.C. Menahem pays tribute to Assyria.
733 B.C. Rezin besieged by the Assyrians in Damascus.
722 B.C. Samaria conquered by the Assyrians.
701 B.C. Sennacherib compels Hezekiah to pay tribute[1].
681—668 B.C. Reign of Esar-haddon.

[1] For the chronology of the events narrated in 2 K. xviii. 17 ff. see the notes on xviii. 13 ff.

To these dates we may add from other sources:

606 B.C. Fall of Nineveh and end of the Assyrian empire.

586 B.C. (= 19th year of Nebuchadrezzar). Fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple.

In general it may be said that where there is a conflict between Assyrian and Hebrew evidence as to a date, the former is to be preferred (*a*) because the Biblical dates frequently differ among themselves, (*b*) because the Assyrians had (and the Hebrews had not) a system of chronology.

§ 6. The Relation of Kings to Chronicles[1].

In comparing Kings and Chronicles it is necessary to remember that there is little doubt that Chronicles, as it stands now in the English Bible (and also in the Hebrew), is not complete. It has been artificially separated from Ezra[2], as Ezra has been artificially separated from Nehemiah. Thus the original book of Chronicles extended from 1 Chr. i. 1 to Neh. xiii. 31, and included the book of Ezra-Nehemiah. Cp. CHRONICLES (Cambridge Bible), *Introduction*, § 2.

Kings is the older work, as a comparison of the respective conclusions of the two works suggests. Kings stops short at 562–1 B.C., Chronicles continues the narrative as far as the second visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem (432 B.C.), and in the genealogy of the high priests as far as Jaddua (Neh. xii. 11), the contemporary of Alexander the Great (circ. 330 B.C.). Of the whole work however which consists of Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah, only 2 Chronicles is parallel with 1, 2 Kings. In these parallel works the history is carried from the beginning of the reign of Solomon to the destruction of the Temple by the Chaldeans. Where the same events are narrated Chronicles is dependent on Kings[3]. This fact is remarkably illustrated by the correspond-

[1] The two texts are given in a form convenient for comparison in the *Parallel History of the Jewish Monarchy* printed in the text of the Revised Version, 1885, arranged by R. Somervell, M.A., London, 1896—7 [two parts].

[2] Cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 22, 23 with Ezra i. 1—3 a.

[3] It is probable that the Chronicler followed occasionally some other authority. Cp. CHRONICLES (Cambridge Bible), *Introduction*, § 5.

ence between the two great sections (1 K. iii. 4—xii. 24 and 2 Chr. i. 6—xi. 4) which contain the account of Solomon and of the beginning of the reign of Rehoboam. Here we find a change of order (2 Chr. i. 14—17), one or two (not lengthy) insertions (2 Chr. vi. 40—vii. 3; viii. 13—15), and a few revisional touches (e.g. in 2 Chr. viii. 2), but the dependence on Kings is clear. Further, the text of Chronicles is marked by some very important omissions of passages contained in Kings, e.g. 1 K. iii. 16—28 (the judgement of Solomon); iv. 1—19 (the organisation of the kingdom); vii. 1—12 (the building of Solomon's palace); viii. 50 b—61 (part of Solomon's prayer and blessing); xi. 1—40 (Solomon's wives, his apostasy, and his adversaries). These omissions, being plainly intentional, taken as a whole serve to indicate the differences of character and purpose which distinguish Kings from Chronicles. It appears that the Chronicler cared little for the political side of things; his interest lay mainly in religion, or rather in one aspect of religion, namely, in worship. Both he and the compiler of Kings make many references to the Book of the Law, but whereas in Kings the appeal is made to Deuteronomy or to the pre-Deuteronomic (the 'Prophetic') stratum of the Pentateuch, in Chronicles the reference is to the Priestly Code, the latest stratum of the Pentateuch, in which the most detailed directions for worship are given. A comparison of two passages by way of illustration is instructive.

1 K. ix. 25.	2 Chr. viii. 12, 13.
And three times in a year	
did Solomon offer	Then Solomon offered
burnt offerings [and peace offerings]	burnt offerings [unto the LORD]
upon the altar	on the altar [of the LORD]
which he built *unto the* LORD	which he had built *before the porch*
	[even as the duty of every day required,...
	on the sabbaths,
	and on the new moons,
	and on the set feasts,]
	three times in the year

1 K. ix. 25.	2 Chr. viii. 12, 13.
[burning incense therewith] upon the altar that was before the LORD.	
	even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles.

The passage of Chronicles goes on to tell that Solomon, carrying out the arrangements of David, appointed the courses of Priests, of Levites, and of doorkeepers to their several duties.

Here we see that the Chronicler, who abridges his predecessor's work when it deals with politics, expands it when it deals with worship. He supplements accordingly the text of Kings, which seemed to him to be incomplete. But we may doubt whether he is right in attributing the practice of the developed worship of his own day to Solomon.

On the other hand the omissions made by the Chronicler from the text of Kings, which have been already referred to, are of more than liturgical significance. The author's interest in worship, worship centred in the Temple of Jerusalem, has made him less than just to the religion of the Northern kingdom. Though he transcribes from 1 K. xii. 24 JEHOVAH'S sentence on the Disruption of Solomon's kingdom, *This thing is of me*, he treats Israel throughout the history as in rebellion against JEHOVAH by virtue of its rebellion against the house of David (2 Chr. xiii. 8). The Northern kingdom is for the Chronicler cut off from the religious history of Israel. He tells us nothing of Elijah, nothing of Elisha[1]. In Kings twenty-five chapters (1 K. xii. 25—2 K. xv. 31) are mainly occupied with the history of the North, with special reference to its religious aspect as illustrated in the lives of Elijah and Elisha. In Chronicles there are only four chapters which supply a parallel narrative in this section, namely, 2 Chr. xviii.; xxii. 10—xxiv. 12; xxv. 1—4, 11, 17—xxvi. 2; and of these only the first (the

[1] An obscure allusion to a 'writing of Elijah' addressed to Jehoram king of Judah (2 Chr. xxi. 12) is no real exception.

death of Ahab at Ramoth-gilead) may be called an 'Israelitish' chapter.

The motto of the Chronicler might well have been 'Religion is of the Jews,' i.e. not of their brethren of Israel. The compiler of Kings worked with less narrow limitations. He incorporates religious narratives in which the Temple of Jerusalem has no place. Of his three great prophets, Elijah, Elisha, and Isaiah, two belonged to the Northern kingdom. In his narrative JEHOVAH the God of all Israel delivers Samaria from the Syrians no less than Jerusalem from Sennacherib. The compiler of Kings held indeed the Deuteronomic view that worship performed outside Jerusalem was irregular, but this did not prevent him from devoting half his work to the story of JEHOVAH'S providence over the separated kingdom of Israel. The Chronicler fixes his gaze upon the narrow fold of the Jewish Church, the writer of Kings, though an orthodox Judaean, has been led by a broader sympathy to record the fortunes of both sections of the flock which made up the ancient people of God.

§ 7. CHARACTER AND PURPOSE.

At the present day the spheres of History and of Story are as widely sundered as the poles. This, however, is a condition which is due to influences which are comparatively modern. In the ancient world History and Story were twin sisters, who (to continue the metaphor) lived in one house. The ancient historians combined the careful narrative of events of their own and recent time with a number of stories of earlier days, of the truth of which they had no means of judging. These stories are of varying historical value. Some of them, though not literally true, seem to embody important tribal traditions regarding the relationships and migrations of the respective tribes in very early days. If these stories are not true in their superficial sense, they are historically valuable when they are properly understood. Of such stories added to narratives of direct historical value the Annals of the Greeks and Romans consist; it would be strange, if the Hebrew Annals were composed on a plan altogether different.

Now it is clear that there are diverse elements in Kings.

(Cp. § 3, STRUCTURE AND SOURCES.) There are on the one hand many sections which seem to be extracts from state records, and so to be of direct historical value. On the other hand there are narratives which seem rather to be of the nature of parables or of sermons in story-form. See e.g. 1 K. xiii. 1—32 (the Disobedient Prophet); xiv. 1—18 (the Death of the Son of Jeroboam); 2 K. ii. 23 f. (the Mocking Children); xiii. 20 f. (the Bones of Elisha). It becomes necessary to ask, must we accept these stories as literally true because they are found in the Annals of Israel, though we should doubt them or reject them if we found them in the Annals of Greece or Rome? Must we either accept the whole book of Kings as historical, or reject it, as unworthy to be a medium of Divine revelation, because some parts of it are not history?

From any such dilemma we are delivered by nothing less authoritative than the example and practice of our Lord Himself. Story is not an unworthy medium for a Divine message, for Christ made use of this very medium in His parables. He did not merely tolerate the use of tale in teaching; he sanctioned it fully by His own regular practice. We dare not then refuse to find in the Annals of Israel, and in particular in the book of Kings, the same two elements which are found in other early Annals. We have on the one side a historical narrative, and on the other, supplementing it, a number of stories, the historical value of which lies open to serious dispute. Each of these elements has its own particular value. The main facts of the history convey the lesson of God's providence over the nations. The stories contained in the book vary the lesson, and apply it to individuals. Thus in the story which tells how the young man saw chariots of fire surrounding the prophet (2 K. vi. 13—15), there is an allegory which expresses with unsurpassed force the truth of God's presence with his servants. This story has been of religious value in many ages by helping men in difficulty to realise the nearness of Divine help, for truth thus vividly expressed receives fresh power to prevail with men. But the proof of the truth of God's overruling guidance is not in the isolated allegory, but in the general course of the history which the book of Kings relates.

It must not be forgotten that Kings is not primarily a book of political history. It is not written with the main object of recording the 'acts' and the 'might' of each king in succession. For such matters the reader is systematically referred to the State Chronicles of Israel and Judah. Kings is a book of *Prophets and Kings*, the Prophets holding the first place. The title of the book as given in some MSS. of the Peshitta[1] is,

'The book of the kings who were in that ancient people. In which book are written the stories of the prophets, who were in those times in their generations.'

Kings by virtue of its contents belongs as much to the Prophetical Books as to the Historical. It is not a continuous chronicle; it is a book of prophetic teaching, in which sometimes history, sometimes story, is employed as the vehicle of the teaching.

It may, however, be objected that Kings contains some narratives and some stories which are not edifying for Christians. This contention is true, and the fact only to be expected. If in the Pentateuch our Lord found some things written because of the hardness of men's hearts (Matt. xix. 8), we cannot be surprised, if such things are found in the Historical books also. Not all the teaching which was suitable for the Jews of the sixth century B.C. is suited for the Church of to-day. From our Christian vantage ground we may criticize deeds of Elijah and Elisha, even deeds done in their prophetic character, and we may condemn any attempt to treat such deeds as affording even to the slightest degree guidance for Christian practice. But when all has been said, it must be confessed that the criticisms to which the book of Kings lies open are criticisms of detail; the principle which guides the writer cannot be assailed.

This principle is that God works in history. Free will is indeed given to men, but the Divine Providence overrules their actions, be they good, or be they evil. Even in the course of a dark chronicle of bloodshed and wrong the writer does not forget that God is the true ruler of the world. The two adversaries of Solomon, Hadad of Edom, and Rezon of Damascus, are raised up against the king by God (1 K. xi. 14,

[1] e.g. in the Buchanan Bible in Camb. Univ. Library.

23). The disruption of the kingdom is of God (1 K. xii. 24). But not only afflictions, but deliverances also come by Divine Providence. When Ahab is besieged by the Syrians in Samaria it is JEHOVAH who delivers the enemy into the hand of the king (1 K. xx. 13 f.). In an equally severe crisis nearly a hundred years later the God of Israel used the prowess of Jeroboam II, who 'did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD' (2 K. xiv. 24—27), to save Israel from destruction. By mercy and by judgement, by encouragement and by warning, JEHOVAH manifested Himself in the history of His people. He shewed Himself to be a 'jealous' God, i.e. One whose 'zeal' (2 K. xix. 31) punishes the wicked and performs great acts on behalf of the oppressed. The history given in Kings is indeed to a large extent 'secular' history of battles and revolutions, but God is shewn to be at work even in the midst of such events as these, using sometimes a good king and sometimes an evil king to carry out His purposes. The fundamental lesson of the book is that not even in its most desperate convulsions does the world break away from the control of its Supreme Governor. This is a lesson of faith needed for all times, when good and evil mingle in desperate strife.

Some special lessons drawn in the New Testament from the book of Kings must be mentioned here. Our Lord refers to the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon (1 K. x. 1 ff.) in order to shew that heathens by their greater zeal sometimes put Israel to shame (Matt. xii. 42). He cites the stories of Elijah at Zarephath (1 K. xvii. 9 ff.) and of Elisha and Naaman (2 K. v. 1 ff.) to shew that the Divine charity reaches beyond the limits of the Chosen People (Luke iv. 25—27). St James (v. 17, 18) illustrates the power of prayer from Elijah's prayer for rain (1 K. xviii. 42 ff.). St Paul (Rom. xi. 2 ff.) confirms himself in the belief that a righteous remnant remains from the unbelieving Israel of his day by recalling the Divine reassurance given to Elijah in 1 K. xix. 18. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 35) seems to have the widow of Zarephath and the Shunammite woman in mind when in illustrating the power of faith he says that by faith *women received their dead by a resurrection.*

The nature of the Contents (cp. § 2) and the structure of the

book (cp. § 3) both serve to indicate the Purpose of the book and to confirm what has already been said in this section. Kings is not a history, but only a series of cameos from history interspersed with material of a different kind. Thus it cannot be said that any sustained attempt is made to narrate the events of Solomon's reign, though ten chapters are devoted to it. From the division of the kingdom to the Fall of the Northern kingdom more space is given to Israel than to Judah, but it cannot be said that the story of Israel is consecutively or systematically told. Politically the reign of Omri must have been of great importance, but it is briefly dismissed in a few verses. The triumphs of Jeroboam the son of Joash (2 K. xiv. 25) must have made some stir in Syria, but they are barely recorded. The play of the politics of Western Asia in which Pekah took part (2 K. xvi. 5 ff.) would have filled an interesting chapter of history, but it is not written in the book of Kings. Similar remarks may be made concerning the story of Judah when, after the Fall of Israel, the narrative of the Southern kingdom is taken up more fully. It becomes clear indeed that it is not the kingdom, whether of the North or of the South, with which the book of Kings is mainly concerned. It is the leaders of religion whether prophets of the North like Elijah and Elisha, or men of the South like Isaiah the prophet or Josiah the king, who claim the largest space. A considerable part of the history of Israel and Judah is told by the way, but the main Purpose of the book is to convey and to enforce religious lessons, taught by the Prophets or written in the book of Deuteronomy.

Among these lessons stands first the lesson of the necessity of Faithfulness to the One God (1 K. ii. 1—4; xviii. 21 ff.), JEHOVAH, who is specially the God of Israel (2 K. v. 15; xviii. 5), but also God of all the Earth (2 K. xix. 15). This faithfulness can be best preserved, the author teaches, by faithfulness to the one Sanctuary, the Temple built by Divine Purpose at Jerusalem (1 K. v. 5; xii. 28—30; xiv. 23; xv. 14; *al.*). JEHOVAH carries on a moral government of the world, punishing the wicked (1 K. xi. 9, 14, 23; xxi. 17 ff.) without respect of persons, and refusing to deal superficially with deep

seated evil (2 K. xxiii. 25 ff.). The uselessness of trying to evade His decree is illustrated in 1 K. xxii. 30 ff. At the same time repentance avails with Him; it may shorten the period of punishment (1 K. viii. 33, 34) or postpone the infliction to a later generation (xxi. 27 ff.). JEHOVAH is merciful both to Israel and to Gentiles (1 K. xvii. 8—24; 2 K. v. 1—19; vi. 21—23; xiv. 6, 26, 27). Stern as the tone of the book sometimes is, it does suggest the tenderness of God. His care for those who love Him is unfailing; He feeds Elijah in his flight (1 K. xvii. 1—15; xix. 1—8); gives Elisha assurance of protection in the vision of the chariots of fire (2 K. vi. 17); and hears the prayer of Hezekiah in his sickness (xx. 1—11). JEHOVAH is the giver of all good things, of mental endowments as well as of material benefits, of Solomon's wisdom and not only of Solomon's wealth (1 K. iii. 5—15). With regard to religious observances it may be said that the value of sacrifice is assumed (1 K. viii. 62, 63), but the value of prayer is enforced (ix. 3—5; xvii. 19—22; 2 K. iv. 33—35; xiii. 4; xix. 4, 15—19). Further it may be said that the germ of sacramental teaching is to be found in the book of Kings. Naaman is healed by the use of the water of Jordan (2 K. v. 10—14). No magical power is attributed to the water, but to wash in Jordan is the Divinely appointed means of recovery, and the bathing is an effectual sign of the cleansing which accompanied it. Naaman learnt to know the God of Israel through an act of faith and obedience.

To conclude. Kings is no mere transcript from the Annals of Israel and Judah; it is a noble religious book. It enforces the principle that 'God is the controlling power and sin the disturbing force in the entire history of men and nations[1].'

§ 8. THE HEBREW TEXT AND THE VERSIONS.

The book of Kings cannot be adequately studied without some reference to the original Hebrew and to the early versions. It is true that the English Authorised Version is as a whole a faithful and literal translation. On the other hand there are many places in which the Hebrew text itself, from which the

[1] F. W. Farrar.

A.V was made, has suffered injury in the course of transcription. The possibility of such injury is not precluded by the fact that the text has been carefully guarded from the time of the Massoretes[1] down to our own day. The work of these Jewish scholars began after much mischief had been done, but it was useful in arresting further deterioration of the text. The Massoretes laid down detailed rules for copying the Scriptures, they recorded each small peculiarity of spelling, they reckoned the number of verses in each book of the Old Testament. A further proof of their carefulness lies in their treatment of various readings. Where there are two readings neither is excluded. The reading accepted for use in the Synagogue (called the *Ḳĕrī*, 'read') is furnished with vowel points, which are allowed to stand in the text, while the consonants stand in the margin. On the other hand the reading not so accepted (called the *Kĕthīb*, 'written') is allowed to stand in the text, but it receives no vowel points indicating how it should be read.

Yet another proof of the care bestowed on the Hebrew text after the beginning of the Christian era may be derived from the elaborate system of vowel points which is found in the Old Testament. The Hebrew letters are all consonants, and in the ancient language words as different as *dābār*, 'a word,' *deber*, 'a pestilence,' *dibbēr*, 'he spake,' *dabbēr*, 'speak thou,' were all expressed by the simple letters DBR, and only the context shewed which of these four words was intended. The Old Testament was written originally thus, but at some date later than the time of St Jerome (†420 A.D.) vowel points were added to the consonantal text, the exact pronunciation of every word was indicated, and the ambiguity referred to was removed.

From all that has been said it may be gathered that the scrupulous care notoriously bestowed on the Hebrew text belongs not to the days when the books were composed, but to later times. The care of the Massoretes did not become

[1] The Massoretes ('transmitters' from *māsar*, 'transmit') were the Jewish scholars who undertook the care of the text of the Scriptures. They were the successors of the Scribes. Their activity seems to have extended over centuries. It began in the early centuries of the Christian era.

generally effective in preserving the text until two or three centuries or more after the beginning of the Christian era. In the second century of our era Jewish scholars utter warnings against 'incorrect copies,' i.e. copies which differed from the text adopted at that time as the standard. It seems that variations were in existence of more importance than those which are found in the margin of Hebrew Bibles to-day. It is therefore necessary in many cases to go behind the text of printed Hebrew Bibles, the Massoretic text as it is called, and to enquire what was the original reading of the Hebrew.

A study of the Greek version, the SEPTUAGINT (LXX.) confirms us in this course. In many passages it appears that the translators, working in the third and second centuries B.C., had before them a Hebrew text different from that of the Massoretes. This text approves itself in many cases as superior to its rival. LXX. exists in more than one form. The earliest and (in general) the best is that found in the Vatican MS. of the fourth century of our era (B). It forms the basis of Dr Swete's edition. A second form, which has been assimilated to the common Hebrew text, is found in the codex Alexandrinus of the fifth century (A). Its readings are cited in Dr Swete's margin. A third form, preserved in a group of cursive MSS., is named after Lucian of Antioch (martyred 311 or 312 A.D.). It has been published (as far as the book of Esther) by P. de Lagarde (Gottingae, 1883).

LXX. is important not only as a witness to an earlier form of the text of the Hebrew Bible, but also as an interpreter of the Old Testament. It is the earliest of all translations of the Bible, it was made in an eastern land (Egypt), and its authors worked before Jerusalem was destroyed and the thread of early tradition weakened. Moreover LXX. was the form in which most of the writers of the New Testament were acquainted with the Old; it was indeed their Bible, as it was the Bible of the earliest Fathers of the Church.

The Syriac version, the PESHITTA, is valuable from the fact that it was made by translators, Jews by birth or by religion, who used a language kindred to Hebrew. They were able to escape some errors of translation found in LXX. This version,

though younger than LXX., belongs to an early date; it was looked upon as old in the days of Ephrem the Syrian (†373 A.D.). 'Syriac' is the form of Aramaic (see next paragraph), used by Christian writers.

Another valuable help to the interpretation of the books of Kings is the TARGUM, a translation made into Aramaic. Aramaic, properly the language of Aram, i.e. Syria, was spoken over the greater part of Western Asia as far east as Babylon, and in the commercial cities of Egypt as far south as Assuan. Four passages of the Old Testament (Ezra iv. 8—vi. 18; vii. 12—26; Jer. x. 11; Dan. ii. 4—vii. 28) are written in Aramaic. It was the language of diplomacy (2 K. xviii. 26) and of commerce, and it is probable that the Jews in Babylon, in Mesopotamia, and in parts of Syria understood it better than their own sacred tongue. In our Lord's time it was spoken in Palestine; and some of our Lord's own words are recorded in Aramaic; *Tălītha cūm* (*cumi*; Mark v. 41); *Ephphatha* (Mark vii. 34); *Sabachthani* (Matt. xxvii. 46). The Targum existed originally in an oral form; it is based on certain traditional glosses recited in the Synagogue by the Methurgeman (Interpreter) when the lesson was read. The work of compilation was perhaps finished in the fifth century of our era.

The Latin VULGATE made (391—404 A.D.) by St Jerome is of importance for more than one reason. It was made directly from the Hebrew by one of the few Fathers who knew Hebrew. St Jerome had as his teacher a Jew, who taught him some traditional interpretations. He also had access to the three Greek translations, those of AQUILA, SYMMACHUS, and THEODOTION, which were made in the second century of our era, and were used by the great Origen for the compilation of the Hexapla. The Vulgate is not dependent on the LXX.

Two English translations of the Old Testament are at present in use, the AUTHORISED VERSION of 1611 executed at the command of James I, and the REVISED VERSION of 1885, the inception of which was due to the Convocation of Canterbury. These names are unfortunate, for the Version of 1611 was never fully authorised, and the title 'Revised' given to the Version of 1885 does not serve to distinguish

it from earlier translations, for the 'Authorised Version' was but a revision of the Bishops' Bible (1568), and the Bishops' Bible a revision of the Great Bible (1539). The 'Authorised Version' is probably so called because the work was carried out, as the title page testifies, 'By His Majesties special command[1].' For the same reason it is sometimes called, 'King James's Version.' It was never authorised in any way until 1661, when the Epistles and Gospels were inserted in the Revised Prayer Book from the 'new translation.' Thus fifty years passed before any part of the A.V. was authorised for use in the services of the English Church, and now after nearly three hundred years the authorised version of the Psalms is not the version of King James, but the version of the Great Bible.

The language of A.V. was in part archaic from the first, for it was founded upon the work of William Tyndale (martyred 1536). In ordinary editions, however, a modern look has been given to A.V. by a multitude of small changes introduced by successive editors and printers[2]. A few examples of such changes are given here under three heads.

(*a*) Spelling.

1 K. i. 9, the kings (king's) sons...the kings (king's) servants.

1 K. xviii. 5, that we leese (lose) not all the beasts.

1 K. xviii. 28, cut themselves...with swords and lancers (lancets). (Lances or spears are meant.)

2 K. iv. 35, the child neesed (sneezed) seven times.

2 K. vi. 16, they that be with us are moe then (more than) they that be with them.

(*b*) Grammatical forms.

1 K. vii. 13, Solomon...fet (fetched) Hiram out of Tyre.

2 K. ix. 32, He lift (lifted) up his face.

2 K. xii. 18, His fathers had dedicate (dedicated).

[1] The inscription, 'Appointed to be read in Churches,' was taken over by the printer in 1611 from the title page of the Bishops' Bible, which was appointed by Convocation to be so read.

[2] See Scrivener's Introduction prefixed to the *Cambridge Paragraph Bible* (1873).

(*c*) Syntax.

1 K. vi. 1, In the four hundred and fourscore year (and eighteth year).

1 K. xv. 14, Asa his heart (Asa's heart) was perfect.

1 K. xvi. 23, In the thirty and one year (and first year).

In spite, however, of the work of editors and printers a number of archaisms remain in the Authorised Version of Kings. Such are found in the following passages.

1 K. v. 4, Evil occurrent, i.e. untoward event.

1 K. v. 6, There is not among us any that can skill (understand how) to hew timber.

1 K. xviii. 21, How long halt ye (go ye limping) between two opinions?

2 K. ii. 19, The water is naught (naughty, bad. Cp. Jer. xxiv. 2, A.V.).

2 K. xv. 5, A several (separate) house.

None of these archaisms is changed in the text of R.V., the Revisers declaring in their Preface that they 'thought it no part of their duty to reduce [the language of A.V.] to conformity with modern usage.'

The Revisers in fact touched the translation of the books of Kings with a sparing hand. Perhaps the main difference between their work and that of their predecessors is that whereas in the Heb. text A.V. usually follows the *Kĕrī*, R.V. follows as far as possible the *Kĕthīb*; see 1 K. i. 47; ix. 18; 2 K. xix. 37. A second important difference is found in the margins of the two versions. R.V. refers not infrequently to the readings of the 'ancient authorities,' or 'ancient versions,' sometimes specifying which are meant; see 1 K. vi. 8; vii. 40; xi. 15; xiii. 12; xv. 6; xxi. 23. Such references hardly occur in the margin of A.V.

Two groups of changes have been introduced into the text with happy result.

The first group secures a more accurate geographical nomenclature. Thus 'the river' where the Euphrates is meant, is uniformly given with a capital letter, 'the River' (1 K. iv. 24; xiv 15). The Heb. term *Shĕphēlah* which designates the strip of low hill country between the Judaean mountains and the

coastland of the Mediterranean is rendered 'the lowland' (1 K. x. 27) as in Deut. i. 7 *al.* Similarly the term *Arābah*, which designates the deep valley which runs North and South of the Dead Sea, is adopted in R.V. instead of the vague term, 'the plain' (2 K. xiv. 25; xxv. 4). The *Gebalites*, i.e. the inhabitants of Gebal (Byblus) in Northern Phoenicia, are recognised, and (rightly) appear in 1 K. v. 18. *Gaza* takes the place of the unusual form *Azzah* in 1 K. iv. 24.

The second group of changes embraces terms belonging to the unlawful worship practised during the period of the kings. The term 'grove' used in A.V. and derived from LXX., entirely disappears, the original Heb. word *Ashērah* being retained in R.V. untranslated. *Ashērah* (plural, *Ashērim*) means sometimes the wooden symbol, sometimes the rough wooden image of a goddess; sometimes again it is used as the name of the goddess. It never means 'grove.' See 1 K. xiv. 23; 2 K. xxi. 7. The 'images' (*maṣṣēboth*) of A.V. often mentioned with the *Ashērah* are rightly represented in R.V. as 'pillars' (marg., 'obelisks'). The monoliths found during the excavations at Gezer, Tell-eṣ-Ṣafi, and Taanach, are doubtless *maṣṣēboth*.

Interesting changes introduced into the text of R.V. are found in the following passages; 1 K. v. 9; x. 28; xi. 28; xii. 31; 2 K. xix. 7, 23, 24; xxii. 14; xxiii. 17; xxv. 4. Other changes (of more doubtful value) appear in 1 K. xvi. 34; xvii. 1; 2 K. xvi. 18. Important changes suggested in the margin are found in 1 K. iv. 24 ('beyond the River'); xx. 33; xxi. 10; 2 K. xv. 5; xviii. 4; 23. Many of the marginal readings are superior to those which were allowed to remain in the text.

It is indeed only very rarely that the margin can be neglected by the student. Even when the alternative renderings do not appear to be clearly superior, they may serve one or more of three useful purposes. Sometimes they point to an ambiguity in the Hebrew which can only be solved by an appeal to the context. Thus the note, 'Heb. *a man of death*' is appended to the rendering, *a man worthy of death* (1 K. ii. 26), because the Heb. phrase may equally well denote, *a man as good as dead*, *a dead man*, as in 2 Sam. xix. 28. In 1 K. ix. 13; 2 K.

xviii. 4, *he called* and *one called* are equally admissible renderings, for the pronoun is not expressed in the Hebrew. Hence the passive renderings given in the margin, as alternatives, are not grammatically inferior to the active renderings given in the text; the true translations may be severally, *They* (the cities) *were called Cabul*; *It* (the brasen serpent) *was called Nehushtan*. Again, a frequent cause of ambiguity in Hebrew arises from the use of singular and plural. Most Heb. substantives may be used in the singular as collectives; hence arises the doubt between text and margin, *chariot* and *chariots* in 2 K. ii. 11; xiii. 14. On the other hand the word commonly used in Hebrew for 'God,' *Elohim*, is a plural in form, and in 2 K. xvii. 31 (and in other places) a marginal note points to the consequent ambiguity.

A further purpose of the marginal notes is to call attention to the difficulty which sometimes arises of finding an accurate equivalent for a Heb. word, even when the meaning is well known. *Fir* (1 K. v. 8, text) has the note, 'Or, *cypress*,' and *oak* (1 K. xiii. 14) the note 'Or, *terebinth*,' to shew that these Syrian trees resemble the English trees whose names are given in the text, but are not identical with them. A still more striking instance is supplied by 1 K. ii. 6, *the grave* (text), 'Heb. *Sheol*' (marg.). 'The Hebrew *Sheol*, which signifies the abode of departed spirits, and corresponds to the Greek Hades, or the under world, is variously rendered in the Authorised Version by "grave," "pit," and "hell." Of these renderings "hell," if it could be taken in its original sense as used in the Creeds, would be a fairly adequate equivalent for the Hebrew word; but it is so commonly understood of the place of torment that to employ it frequently would lead to inevitable misunderstanding. The Revisers therefore in the historical narratives have left the rendering "the grave" or "the pit" in the text, with a marginal note "Heb. *Sheôl*" to indicate that it does not signify "the place of burial"' (*Revisers' Preface to the Old Testament*).

The third purpose of the marginal notes is to call attention to *nuances* of meaning which depend on Hebrew thought or Hebrew custom. Thus in 2 K. xxii. 4; xxiii. 4; xxv. 18 (cp. xii. 9) the text of R.V. has 'keepers of *the door*.' This rendering is an accommodation to English thought; a man's *door*

represents the entrance to his home, and the home itself. But in the East the *threshold*, across which a man steps in entering his home, represents to him all the associations of home. To the Eastern the threshold, not the door, is a symbol. Accordingly the margin gives 'Heb. *threshold*' in all four passages. Another instance is found in 2 K. v. 1; xiii. 17; *victory* (text), 'Heb. *salvation*' (marg.). The English word *victory* suggests only a triumph over enemies, whereas the Heb. suggests rather deliverance from destruction by them.

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PARALLEL TABLE OF REIGNS AND EVENTS RECORDED IN KINGS.

ISRAEL.	*JUDAH.*
JEROBOAM.	REHOBOAM.
Calf-worship established at Bethel and Dan.	Shemaiah prophesies.
An unnamed prophet prophesies against Bethel.	Shishak king of Egypt (circ. 952—930 B.C.) takes away the Temple treasures.
	ABIJAM.
	ASA
	puts down idolatrous practices; calls in the Syrians to aid him against Baasha.
NADAB (son of Jeroboam).	
BAASHA	
builds Ramah, a menace to Judah.	
Jehu prophesies.	
ELAH (son of Baasha)	
assassinated by Zimri.	
OMRI.	
Civil war with Tibni.	
Samaria made the capital of Israel.	
AHAB (son of Omri).	JEHOSHAPHAT
Alliance with the Zidonians.	helps Ahab in his last battle against the Syrians at Ramoth-gilead;
An altar for Baal set up in Samaria.	
Elijah prophesies.	
Prophets of Baal slain.	
[Ahab fights in the battle of Karkar against Shalmaneser II. of Assyria in 854 B.C.]	
Wars against Syria.	
AHAZIAH (son of Ahab).	
JEHORAM, (brother of Ahaziah).	
War against Mesha king of Moab.	helps Jehoram in the Moabite war.

ISRAEL.	*JUDAH.*
JEHORAM (brother of Ahaziah). Elisha prophesies.	
	JEHORAM (son of Jehoshaphat). Edom revolts from Judah.
	AHAZIAH (son of Jehoram) helps Jehoram of Israel in the Syrian war at Ramoth-gilead.
Jehoram assassinated by Jehu.	
JEHU destroys the worshippers of Baal, pays tribute to Shalmaneser II. of Assyria in 842 B.C. Syrian wars.	
	ATHALIAH (daughter of Ahab of Israel) allows the worship of Baal. Overthrown by a conspiracy headed by Jehoiada the priest.
JEHOAHAZ (son of Jehu) oppressed by the Syrians.	
	JOASH (son of Ahaziah) repairs the Temple; pays tribute to the Syrians.
JOASH (son of Jehoahaz). Death of Elisha. Victories over the Syrians.	
	AMAZIAH. Victorious over the Edomites. Vanquished by Joash of Israel.
JEROBOAM (son of Joash). Victorious over the Syrians. Amos prophesies. Hosea prophesies under Jeroboam and the succeeding kings.	
	AZARIAH (UZZIAH).
ZECHARIAH (son of Jeroboam) assassinated by Shallum.	
MENAHEM pays tribute to Pul, i.e. Tiglath-pileser III. king of Assyria (745—727 B.C.).	
	AZARIAH and his son JOTHAM. (*Reigns of* 52 *years and of* 16 *years respectively are attributed to father and son, but since Jotham was regent for Azariah, it may be that his reign is to be included in the years assigned to his father. Moreover the accuracy of the number of years attributed to these kings and to their Israelite contemporaries is highly uncertain.*) Isaiah begins to prophesy.
PEKAHIAH (son of Menahem).	
PEKAH. Gilead and Galilee carried captive by Tiglath-pileser in 733—732 B.C.	
	AHAZ submits to Tiglath-pileser III. (*The fall of Samaria took place probably in the reign of Ahaz: see* 2 K. xvii. 1, *note.*)
HOSHEA submits to Shalmaneser IV. king of Assyria (727—722 B.C.); revolts; Samaria taken by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.	

LET HIM THAT READETH UNDERSTAND.

THE
SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.

1 AND Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of
2 Ahab. And Ahaziah fell down through the lattice in his
upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he

CH. I. 1 (cp. iii. 4—27). REVOLT OF MOAB.

1. *And Moab rebelled*] The division of Kings into two books is quite arbitrary; in LXX. this verse is repeated; it closes the First Book and also opens the Second. See the Introduction, pages x, xi.

2—16. ELIJAH AND AHAZIAH.

This story of Ahaziah's sickness and death falls naturally into two parts. The first part (*vv.* 2—8) is complete in itself. Ahaziah falls sick, and sends to consult a foreign god concerning his recovery. His messengers do not reach their destination, for they are turned back by a man who sends the king an unfavourable answer from the God of Israel. Ahaziah on hearing what kind of a man bore the message, exclaims, *It is Elijah*, and (*v.* 17) dies according to the answer which he has received.

The account given in the second part (*vv.* 9—16) is possibly a later addition to the story. These verses are midrashic in character, and seem to have been composed for what the writer conceived to be the greater glory of Elijah. It is to be remembered that our Lord rebuked his disciples for wishing to act in the manner here ascribed to the great prophet (Luke ix. 51—56).

2—8. AHAZIAH'S SICKNESS AND ELIJAH'S PROPHECY.

2. *the lattice*] Probably just such a one as is to be seen in the East at the present day. From many a native house in Cairo high up on the outer wall there juts out a wooden cage pierced with many small openings of fanciful shapes through which the sightseer may look into the street without being seen. Ahaziah's lattice was apparently insecure.

was sick] The Heb. word is applied to one suffering from wounds and injuries; it is used in 1 K. xxii. 34.

sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-
zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this
3 sickness. But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the
Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of
Samaria, and say unto them, Is it because there is no God
in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of
4 Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not
come down from the bed whither thou art gone up, but
5 shalt surely die. And Elijah departed. And the messengers
returned unto him, and he said unto them, Why is it that
6 ye are returned? And they said unto him, There came up
a man to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto
the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the
LORD, Is it because there is no God in Israel, that thou
sendest to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? there-
fore thou shalt not come down from the bed whither thou

Baal-zebub] If this reading (which has the support of LXX. and of the versions generally) is correct, we have here a title which means 'the *baal* (or "lord") of flies.' 'Flies' in Heb. is a generic term, embracing many kinds of winged insects. In the East 'flies' amount to a plague; e.g. they are a frequent cause of ophthalmia specially with young children. A *god of flies* therefore would be an important deity, for he could send flies as a punishment, and banish them in answer to prayers and offerings. In Arcadia Zeus himself was worshipped under the name of Ἀπόμυιος, as the god who chased away flies (Pausanias v. XIV. 2). To the god of flies was doubtless attributed the power of driving away other evils, e.g. sicknesses, as well.

The reading *Baal-zebub* however cannot be pronounced to be certain. It is possible indeed that it is an intentional corruption of the real title of the god of Ekron, which may have been *Baal-zebul*, 'the lord of the Dwelling,' i.e. of the Temple of Ekron. This is the reading of the name given by Symmachus, and it is supported by the evidence of the New Testament. The name of the heathen god *Beelzebul*[1] had become a name of ridicule applicable to a demon among the Jews of our Lord's time.

Ekron] One of the five chief cities of the Philistines (1 Sam. v. 10; vi. 16, 17). Under the form *Amḳarruna* it is mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions as having been savagely punished by Sennacherib for joining Hezekiah in a revolt against Assyria. It is the modern '*Akir* about six miles due west of Tell-el-Jezer (Gezer, 1 K. ix. 15).

3. *the angel of the LORD*] Cp. xix. 5, 7.

[1] Βεελζεβούλ (or Βεεζεβούλ, the first λ having fallen out in pronunciation before ζ) is beyond doubt the right reading in Matt. x. 25 *al.*

art gone up, but shalt surely die. And he said unto them, 7
What manner of man was he which came up to meet you,
and told you these words? And they answered him, He 8
was [1]an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about
his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite. Then 9
the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And
he went up to him: and, behold, he [2]sat on the top of the
hill. And he spake unto him, O man of God, the king hath
said, Come down. And Elijah answered and said to the 10
captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, let fire come down
from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there
came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his
fifty. And again he sent unto him another captain of fifty 11
with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man
of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly. And 12
Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let
fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty.
And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed

[1] Or, *a man with* a garment of *hair* [2] Or, *dwelt*

8. *an hairy man*] Better, **a man with a mantle of hair.** Cp. ii. 8, 13, 14 and especially Zech. xiii. 4, 'The prophets shall be ashamed...neither shall they be clothed with a mantle of hair to deceive' (literal translation). The mantle (Heb. *addereth*) of hair was a prophet's distinctive dress. Cp. Matt. iii. 4, 'John the Baptist had his garment of camel's hair,—*ἀπὸ τριχῶν καμήλου.*'

9—16. Elijah brought before Ahaziah.

9. *a captain of fifty*] Cp. ii. 7; Exod. xviii. 21; Deut. i. 15; 1 Sam. viii. 12.

sat] Marg. *dwelt*. This ambiguity is inherent in the meaning of the Heb. word. Cp. xix. 15.

the hill] Or, *the mountain*; so LXX. Perhaps Carmel is meant.

10. *let fire come down from heaven*] Cp. 1 K. xviii 38; Luke ix. 54, where however the words *even as Elijah did* are absent from the best authorities.

11. *And he answered*] The expression *to answer* is used in Hebrew in a wider sense than in English; here the captain *answers* the defiant bearing of the prophet, not anything which the prophet had said. Cp. 1 Sam. ix. 17 (with margin).

Come down quickly] A more urgent message than in *v.* 9.

12. *unto them*] LXX. *unto him.*

the fire of God] Cp. 1 K. xviii. 38, note. In *v.* 10 it is simply 'fire'; and so LXX. in this verse also. No difference of meaning is to be supposed.

13 him and his fifty. And again he sent the captain of a third
fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went
up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and
besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray
thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants,
14 be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down
from heaven, and consumed the two former captains of fifty
with their fifties: but now let my life be precious in thy
15 sight. And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go
down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and
16 went down with him unto the king. And he said unto him,
Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers
to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, is it because
there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word? therefore
thou shalt not come down from the bed whither thou art
17 gone up, but shalt surely die. So he died according to the
word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram
began to reign in his stead in the second year of Jehoram
the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no
18 son. Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are
they not written in the book of the chronicles of the
kings of Israel?

2 And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up
Elijah by a whirlwind into heaven, that Elijah went with

17, 18. AHAZIAH SUCCEEDED BY JEHORAM.

17. *And Jehoram*] LXX. (A), Vulg. Pesh. add *his brother*, which is a correct gloss, even if it be no part of the original text.

in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah] These words are not found in LXX., and their presence in the Massoretic text is doubtless due to scribal error. Jehoram of Israel came to the throne *in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat* (iii. 1).

CH. II. 1—12. THE ASSUMPTION OF ELIJAH.

This narrative, if its meaning be that Elijah was taken up to heaven in the body, is unique in the Bible. Neither the Translation of Enoch, nor the Ascension of our Lord is any parallel. Of Enoch it is said in Gen. v. 24 simply that God *took him*. This was explained by the later Jews to mean that he *did not see death* (Heb. xi. 5), but the words admit equally well a different interpretation. The Ascension of our Lord is no parallel, for He rose with His Resurrection body. It is

Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, 2
I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me as far as Beth-el.
And Elisha said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth,
I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth-el. And 3
the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came forth to
Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD
will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And
he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. And Elijah 4
said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD
hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth,
and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came
to Jericho. And the sons of the prophets that were at 5
Jericho came near to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest
thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head
to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your
peace. And Elijah said unto him, Tarry here, I pray 6
thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said,
As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave

probable that this mysterious account is figurative. As in the case of Moses (Deut. xxxiv. 6), the place of Elijah's burial was unknown.

1. *Gilgal*] This word, a place-name, is said to mean a 'sacred circle of stones,' such as Stonehenge. Cp. Josh. iv. 20. Such circles are not uncommon in Palestine (Nowack, *Heb. Archäologie*, vol. I. p. 93, where illustrations are given); indeed 'a little to the N. of *Bêlin* [=*Beth-el*, cp. *v.* 2] is a remarkable circle of stones which may possibly have had a religious significance' (*Baedeker*, p. 213); and again at *Tell-Jeljul*, east of Jericho, there is an ancient cromlech (*Baedeker*, p. 167). Either of these may mark the site of the *Gilgal* mentioned here. There is evidence for the existence of more than one place called *Gilgal* in Old Testament times, but the *Gilgal* of iv. 38 is probably in any case to be identified with the *Gilgal* of ii. 1.

2. *they went down to Beth-el*] Better, they went down by Beth-el. One of the best known roads eastwards leads down past Beth-el into the Jordan Valley. Beth-el is one of the highest points of the central ridge of Palestine, and the usual phrase in the Old Testament is '*go up* to Beth-el' (*v.* 23; Gen. xxxv. 1; Jud. i. 22; 1 Sam. x. 3).

3. *the sons of the prophets*] Cp. iv. 1, 38; ix. 1; 1 K. xx. 35. The prophets from the earliest times lived in societies (1 Sam. x. 5), and as members of such societies were called *sons of the prophets*. They were numerous and were to be found at Gilgal, Beth-el, Jericho, and probably other places.

4. *Jericho*] Cp. 1 K. xvi. 34, note.

7 thee. And they two went on. And fifty men of the sons
of the prophets went, and stood over against them afar off:
8 and they two stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle,
and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they
were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over
9 on dry ground. And it came to pass, [1]when they were gone
over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for
thee, before I be taken from thee. And Elisha said, I pray
10 thee, let [2]a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And
he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: *nevertheless*, if thou
see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee;
11 but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they
still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* [3]a
chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which parted them both
asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.
12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the
[4]chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof! And he saw

[1] Or, *as they went* [2] That is, the portion of the firstborn. See Deut. xxi. 17 [3] Or, *chariots* [4] Or, *chariot*

8. *mantle*] Cp. i. 8, note.

on dry ground] 'The depth of the water [in the river Jordan] varies greatly with the seasons. In autumn there are numerous fords. One of the most famous is that near the mouth of the *Wâdy el-Kelt*.... It is the bathing place of the pilgrims' (*Baedeker*, p. 169). The ford alluded to by Baedeker is near Jericho, but the account given here excludes the use of any ford.

9. *a double portion of thy spirit*] See marg. Elisha claims the privilege of the firstborn of Elijah's spiritual sons. Targ. ...*of thy spirit of prophecy*.

10. *if thou see me*] Elisha will receive a sign to shew him whether his petition is granted or not.

it shall be so unto thee] Better, **may it be so unto thee!** It is a blessing, not a promise.

11. *a chariot*] Better as marg., **chariots.**

by a whirlwind] Cp. Ezek. i. 4.

12. *My father...the horsemen thereof*] These are the very words addressed to Elisha himself on his death-bed by Joash king of Israel (xiii. 14). Their appropriateness as addressed to Elisha is obvious; the help he gave to his countrymen against Syria was worth many chariots and horsemen to Israel. Cp. vi. 8—vii. 20; xiii. 14—19. On the other hand it is not clear in what sense they can apply to Elijah, who appears solely as the denouncer of the evil deeds of the kings of Israel. It may be that the original text of this verse had only, *My father, my*

him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah 13
that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan. And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from 14
him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD, [1]the God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they were divided hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were 15
at Jericho over against him saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him. And they 16
said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send. And when they urged him 17
till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not. And they came back to him, while he tarried at Jericho; 18
and he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, we 19

[1] Or, *the God of Elijah, even he? and when he had smitten &c.*

father as Elisha's exclamation, and that the remaining words were introduced by a very early transcriber from xiii. 14.

13—25. THE ACTS OF ELISHA.

13. *He took up also*] Rather, **And he lifted on high**; LXX. καὶ ὕψωσεν. It was a mute appeal to God by a significant action to fulfil Elijah's prayer for him that he might receive a double portion of Elijah's spirit. He has seen his master taken from him, and he holds up the mantle in testimony of the fact, and he 'offers' it to God, before he takes it as the badge of his new office. The same Heb. word *hērīm* (a hiphil) is used Exod. xxxv. 24; Num. xv. 19. From the same root comes *tĕrūmāh*, '*heave*-offering,' properly, an offering which was *lifted up* for presentation.

14. *Where is the LORD*] Thus translated the words seem an utterance of despair; probably however LXX. (A) is right in translating, *Where, O Lord* or *By which way, O Lord?* As the prophet speaks the river is divided and yields him passage.

15. *doth rest*] The same Heb. word as in Isa. xi. 2.

16. *the spirit of the LORD hath taken him up*] Cp. 1 K. xviii. 12; Ezek. iii. 14, 15; Acts viii. 39. Elijah's appearances and disappearances were sudden; might not the prophet be found again if the search were thorough?

pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the land [1]miscarrieth.
20 And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein.
21 And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast salt therein, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not
22 be from thence any more death or [2]miscarrying. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spake.
23 And he went up from thence unto Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth [3]little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up,
24 thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And he looked behind him and saw them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she-bears out of the
25 wood, and tare forty and two children of them. And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria.

[1] Or, *casteth her fruit* [2] Or, *casting of fruit* [3] Or, *young lads*

19. *the water is naught*] Better, **the water is bad**. The whole Jordan Valley is the ancient basin of a vast inland lake, of which the Dead (Salt) Sea is the survival. Brackish water is found at many points throughout its length. The *Ain-es-Sultan* to the N.W. of the present village of Jericho is traditionally identified with the spring healed by Elisha. The immediate neighbourhood of Jericho is fertile even now, but beyond nearly all is barren (*Baedeker*, p. 165; G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, p. 79, note).

the land miscarrieth] Either, as marg., *the land casteth her fruit*, or, the reference is to the inhabitants of the land, among whom still-birth was common.

20. *salt*] The most unlikely means. So our Lord used clay to anoint the eyes of a blind man (John ix. 6).

23. *Beth-el*] Where there was another colony of 'the sons of the prophets' (*v.* 3).

bald head] A cutting of the hair on certain parts of the head was a sign of mourning in ancient Israel and the surrounding peoples. Cp. Isa. iii. 24; xv. 2; xxii. 12; Amos viii. 10. Elisha no doubt performed this cutting in mourning for Elijah. In Deut. xiv. 1 this ceremony is forbidden, but the prohibition was certainly not obeyed in early Israel, as the passages quoted above from Isaiah shew.

25. *mount Carmel*] This was a spot favoured by Elijah his master. Cp. 1 K. xviii. 19.

to Samaria] According to *v.* 1 he started not from Samaria, but from *Gilgal*. He had a house in Samaria (vi. 24, 32).

Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over 3
Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king
of Judah, and reigned twelve years. And he did that which 2
was evil in the sight of the LORD; but not like his father,
and like his mother: for he put away the [1]pillar of Baal
that his father had made. Nevertheless he cleaved unto the 3
sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made
Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

[1] Or, *obelisk*

CH. III. 1—3. THE REIGN OF JEHORAM.

1. *the son of Ahab*] He was brother of his immediate predecessor, Ahaziah. Cp. i. 17.

2. *he did that which was evil*] Cp. what is said of Ahaziah (1 K. xxii. 52).

pillar] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 23, note. LXX. has pl. *τὰς στήλας*.

had made] Rather, had prepared. A monolith could not be 'made.'

3. *he cleaved*] This preterite is found also in Job xxix. 10, but *clave* (xviii. 6) is the usual form. Cp. *shined* (Job xxix. 3) for *shone*.

the sins] i.e. the golden calves. Cp. Deut. ix. 21; Amos viii. 14. The writer will not say, 'the *gods*.' See 1 K. xvi. 13, note.

4—27. THE MOABITE WAR.

In 1868 a stone monument was discovered in the land of Moab written in the name of Mesha, giving an account of a successful revolt against Israel. The stone was broken up by the Arabs after its discovery, and so the reading of many words is uncertain, but the general purport is quite clear. Beginning with the words 'I Mesha son of Chemoshmelech (*or* Chemoshgad) king of Moab the Dibonite' (Isa. xv. 2), it proceeds to say that 'because Chemosh (1 K. xi. 7, note) was angry with his land,' Omri king of Israel 'took possession of all the land of Medeba' (Num. xxi. 29, 30) and Israel dwelt in it 'his days and half his son's days, even forty years.' 'But,' continues Mesha, 'in my days Chemosh restored it, and I built Baal-meon.' The inscription ends with a story of the taking of cities from Israel, Ataroth and Nebo (Num. xxxii. 3), and Jahaz (Isa. xv. 4), and with the building of a city called *Ḳirḥah* and others. There appears to be also an allusion to the sheep, which formed so important a part of the wealth of Moab. See Hastings' *Dictionary* III. 404—8 for an illustration and full text.

Mesha's story may be briefly summed up: (1) Moab being in servitude to Omri and for a time to Ahab, (2) revolts during the latter's reign under the leadership of Mesha, and (3) pursues an unbroken course of successes against Israel.

The summary of events as given in Kings is different in important respects: (1) Mesha of Moab being in servitude to Israel, (2) revolts on

4 Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster; and he
rendered unto the king of Israel [1]the wool of an hundred
5 thousand lambs, and of an hundred thousand rams. But it
came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab
6 rebelled against the king of Israel. And king Jehoram
went out of Samaria at that time, and mustered all Israel.

[1] Or, *an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams*, with *the wool*

the death of Ahab; (3) Jehoram of Israel, narrowly escaping disaster, lays Moab waste, and shuts up the king of Moab in Kir; but (4) 'great wrath' comes upon Israel and the host retires from Moab. The accounts agree as to the servitude of Moab in Ahab's reign, and as to the name of the revolted Moabite king. The successes which Mesha claims receive a general acknowledgement in the statement of Kings that *the king of Moab rebelled*. The temporary success of Jehoram is omitted on the Moabite stone, either because the stone was put up before his expedition, or because the success was only temporary. It is possible that some of Mesha's achievements are hinted at in the mention of the 'great wrath' which came upon Israel (*v.* 27).

4, 5. Revolt of Moab.

4. *a sheepmaster*] The same word in the plural is translated 'herdmen' in Amos i. 1. The word is used only in these two places, and its precise meaning is uncertain.

rendered] i.e. paid as tribute. Cp. xvii. 3 (same Heb. word).

the wool of &c.] Marg. *an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams*, with *the wool* (so also A.V.). If 100,000 rams had been taken yearly from Mesha, he could not have long remained a sheepmaster. Moab is well watered and has much grass for flocks. Cp. Num. xxxii. 1—4.

5. *when Ahab was dead*] This statement agrees fairly well with Mesha's reckoning on his monument that Israel oppressed Moab in the days of Omri and 'his son' (Ahab) for 40 years. If we assign Omri 12 years (1 K. xvi. 23) and Ahab 22 years, the total might be counted at 40, a favourite round number in Palestine. If however we accept Mesha's further statement that the forty years were coextensive with the reign of Omri and *half* the reign of Ahab, we have to reject the length of the two reigns as stated in Kings and also the statement of Kings that Ahab's death was the signal for the revolt of Moab.

6—8. Jehoshaphat joins Jehoram in his campaign against Moab.

6. *at that time*] At the time when he first heard the news; so we must understand the words if the text is complete, but it may be that they refer to a context which is now lost.

And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, 7
saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt
thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said,
I will go up: I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my
horses as thy horses. And he said, Which way shall we 8
go up? And he answered, The way of the wilderness of
Edom. So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, 9
and the king of Edom: and they made a circuit of seven

7. *And he went*] i.e. started on the march. In starting from Samaria the Israelite army would march southward and approach the border of Judah. Perhaps the message to Jehoshaphat was sent from the neighbourhood of Jericho, for as Moab lay east of the Dead Sea, Jericho was one obvious base for a campaign against the Moabites.

I am as thou art] Cp. 1 K. xxii. 4.

8. *And he said*] The king of Israel makes the enquiry of his ally and of his officers, not of Jehoshaphat only.

And he answered] The subject is indefinite, 'and one answered' or 'and one said.' There is no reason to suppose that this was the answer of Jehoshaphat only. Indeed there is nothing to shew even that he agreed with the suggestion.

The way of the wilderness of Edom] The more obvious line of advance lay eastward to the fords of the Jordan, and then south-eastwards into the heart of Moab. But three reasons might be suggested against following this route: (1) at some periods of the year the Jordan is a formidable obstacle for an army to cross[1]; (2) the Moabites would expect to be attacked on this line; (3) no pressure could be exerted on the king of Edom, if Moab were approached from the north. The line chosen however was one which ran due south, until the southern end of the Dead Sea was past, and then turned north-eastwards into Moab. The advantages of this route were: (1) there was no great river to cross; (2) the most fertile part of the land of Moab was vulnerable from the south; (3) it was possible to overawe Edom on the way. *Wilderness* of course means only open country affording pasturage for flocks, not desert. The army would however pass through some desolate tracts on the way, e.g. the well-known Valley of Salt (deservedly so called) at the south end of the Dead Sea.

9—20. The distress of the army and the intervention of Elisha.

9. *the king of Edom*] Edom had recently secured autonomy, for during the reign of Jehoshaphat she had been governed by a deputy of the Jewish king (1 K. xxii. 47).

[1] 'In April it is on an average 100 feet wide.... In autumn there are numerous fords' (*Baedeker*, p. 169).

days' journey; and there was no water for the host, nor
10 for the beasts that followed them. And the king of Israel
said, Alas! for the LORD hath called these three kings
11 together to deliver them into the hand of Moab. But
Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD,
that we may inquire of the LORD by him? And one of the
king of Israel's servants answered and said, Elisha the son
of Shaphat is here, which poured water on the hands of
12 Elijah. And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the LORD
is with him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the
13 king of Edom went down to him. And Elisha said unto the
king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee to the
prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother.
And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay: for the LORD
hath called these three kings together to deliver them into
14 the hand of Moab. And Elisha said, As the LORD of hosts
liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard
the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not

seven days' journey] For modern travellers it is a ride of 15 hours from Hebron to Jebel Usdum, and 15 additional hours from Jebel Usdum to El-Kerak[1] (*Baedeker*, p. 144). An army would travel much more slowly.

there was no water] Perhaps rather, *there had been no water*. For seven days the army had been obliged to depend on the water it brought with it.

10. *the LORD hath called*] Compare the words of the same king on a later occasion, *This evil is of the LORD; why should I wait for the LORD any longer?* (vi. 33). He ignores Elisha on this occasion as in the incident of Naaman (v. 6—8). Jehoram was little open to religious influences, but quite ready to attribute misfortunes to the God of Israel.

11. *Jehoshaphat said*] Cp. 1 K. xxii. 5, 7.

poured water] An Eastern does not dip his hands into water to wash, but has water poured over his hands by a servant.

12. *went down*] The tents of the three kings would be pitched in the highest part of the camp in order to overlook it.

13. *to the prophets of thy mother*] We may gather from this that Jehoram had not yet broken with the worship of Baal. The act referred to in *v.* 2 probably *followed* this deliverance granted through Elisha.

Nay: for &c.] The king deprecates being reproached with his unfaithfulness to JEHOVAH at such a time of crisis.

[1] Identified with some probability with Kir-hareseth (*v.* 25).

look toward thee, nor see thee. But now bring me a 15
minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played,
that the hand of the LORD came upon him. And he said, 16
Thus saith the LORD, Make this valley full of trenches. For 17
thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not see wind, neither
shall ye see rain, yet that valley shall be filled with water:
and ye shall drink, both ye and your cattle and your beasts.
And this is but a light thing in the sight of the LORD: he 18
will also deliver the Moabites into your hand. And ye shall 19
smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell
every good tree, and stop all fountains of water, and mar
every good piece of land with stones. And it came to pass 20
in the morning, about the time of offering the oblation, that,

15. *a minstrel*] Cp. 1 Sam. x. 5. On this last passage the great Hebrew teacher Maimonides remarks: 'Prophecy dwells neither amid melancholy, nor amid apathy, but amid joyfulness.'

it came to pass] The tense in Hebrew is frequentative; it describes what usually happened with Elisha, and not what happened on this occasion only.

16. *Make...full of trenches*] A test of faith, for the work was laborious.

valley] Rather, *ravine*; Heb. *naḥal*, LXX. χειμάρρουν. Cp. 1 K. xvii. 3.

17. *see wind*] The reference is to the clouds brought in Palestine by west and south-west winds.

19. *And ye shall smite*] The message from the LORD passes into the prophet's own exhortations. *v.* 17 is a simple utterance of a Divine word ('Thus saith the Lord'); *v.* 18 is a summary in the prophet's own words; *v.* 19 is the prophet's own in expression and probably also in substance. The charge to *fell every good tree* is at variance with the law of Deuteronomy (Deut. xx. 19), but it was a practice of ancient war; Shalmaneser II. for instance boasts that he besieged Hazael in Damascus, and *cut down his plantations*. The severity of Elisha's counsels is to be explained partly from the sternness of his own character, and partly from the severity of the measures taken against Israel by Mesha in his revolt. The Moabite king 'devoted'[1] the Israelite inhabitants of Nebo to Chemosh, i.e. utterly destroyed them.

20. *the oblation*] The reference is to the daily morning sacrifice (Ezek. xlvi. 13—15); there was also a daily evening sacrifice (1 K. xviii. 29, note). The law regarding this daily sacrifice ('The continual burnt offering') is found in Exod. xxix. 38—42.

[1] Cp. Josh. vi. 17 ff.

behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the
21 country was filled with water. Now when all the Moabites
heard that the kings were come up to fight against them,
they [1]gathered themselves together, all that were able to
[2]put on armour, and upward, and stood on the border.
22 And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone
upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water over against
23 them as red as blood: and they said, This is blood;
the kings [3]are surely destroyed, and they have smitten each
24 man his fellow: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil. And
when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up
and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: and
they went forward [4]into the land smiting the Moabites.

[1] Or, *were called together* [2] Heb. *gird themselves with a girdle*
[3] Or, *have surely fought together* [4] Heb. *into it*

by the way of Edom] Though Edom is now almost wholly desert, it was not so in ancient times (Gen. xxvii. 39). Between Jebel Usdum and Petra many springs (some slightly salt) are mentioned by Baedeker (*Palestine*, pp. 149, 150). It was no doubt through the sudden flooding of the streams fed by these springs that the army of Jehoram was saved from perishing by thirst.

21—27. THE CAMPAIGN ENDS IN THE RETREAT OF ISRAEL.

21. *gathered themselves together*] Marg., *were called together*, i.e. by messengers and by the blowing of horns. Cp. 1 Sam. xiii. 3, 4 (A.V.).

that were able to put on armour] Better, **that wore a sword-belt**. Cp. marg Vulg. *qui accincti erant balteo*. The phrase is equivalent to *that drew sword* (*v.* 26). These were the pick of the army.

and upward] A phrase equivalent to *et ceteri*. Bowmen, clubmen, and boys Every possible fighter was needed.

22. *red as blood*] Near the south end of the Dead Sea the soil is reddish through the waste of the red sandstone rocks from which *Edom* ('red') is supposed to take its name.

23. *are surely destroyed*] Better as marg., **have surely fought together**. The expression however is rare, and we cannot be sure that the text is correct.

24. *the Israelites rose up*] The phrase suggests that Jehoram had contrived to give the camp a deserted look, as though his army had fled. Cp. vii. 12.

they went forward into the land] The translation suits the context, for the battle was 'on the border' (*v.* 21), but the Heb. text is again doubtful.

And they beat down the cities; and on every good piece 25
of land they cast every man his stone, and filled it; and
they stopped all the fountains of water, and felled all the
good trees: until in Kir-hareseth *only* they left the stones
thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it.
And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore 26
for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew
sword, to break through unto the king of Edom: but they
could not. Then he took his eldest son that should have 27
reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering
upon the wall. And [1]there was great wrath against Israel:
and they departed from him, and returned to their own
land.

Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the **4**
sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my

[1] Or, *there came great wrath upon Israel*

25. *on every good piece of land they cast every man his stone*] In Palestine in hilly districts the land is terraced with stones, and divisions between properties are marked by stone-walls, so that the destruction of the terraces and of the walls would suffice to ruin the land to a great extent for agriculture. The desolation of the country near Jerusalem, as the writer of these notes saw it in 1895, is largely due to the ruin (accidental or intentional) of the terraces.

Kir-hareseth] Isa. xvi. 7. It is probably the *Kir of Moab* mentioned in Isa. xv. 1 and the *Kir-heres* of Isa. xvi. 11. It is commonly identified with the modern *el-Kerak*, near the south end of the Dead Sea eastward.

26. *unto the king of Edom*] A bitter feud between Edom and Moab seems to have started from this war. Amos (ii. 1) more than a hundred years later denounces Moab for burning the bones of the king of Edom on some unrecorded occasion.

27. *his eldest son*] Cp. Mic. vi. 7.

upon the wall] In order that foe as well as friend might know how strenuously he was working to secure the favour of Chemosh.

there was great wrath against Israel] Rather as marg., **there came great wrath upon Israel**. The reference is to the wrath of JEHOVAH manifesting itself in various calamities. Cp. Num. xvi. 46 [xvii. 11, Heb.]; 2 Chr. xix. 2.

departed from him] The Israelite army believing themselves to be under Divine displeasure, owing probably to an outbreak of plague or some unrecorded disaster, gave up the attempt to reduce the Moabites to submission and retired to their own country.

IV. 1—VIII. 15. THE ACTS OF ELISHA.

This long section tells us little or nothing of the history of Israel. The king of Israel (probably Jehoram) is never mentioned by name;

husband is dead: and thou knowest that thy servant did
fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him
2 my two children to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto
her, What shall I do for thee? tell me; what hast thou
in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not
3 any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he said, Go,
borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty
4 vessels; borrow not a few. And thou shalt go in, and shut
the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and pour out into
all those vessels; and thou shalt set aside that which is full.
5 So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and
upon her sons; they brought *the vessels* to her, and she
6 poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were
full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And
he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil
7 stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. And
he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and
thy sons of the rest.
8 And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where

the prophet is the centre of all action. The source from which these narratives are derived is probably a life of Elisha, and not a book of royal chronicles.

CH. IV. 1—7. THE WIDOW'S OIL.

1. *the creditor is come*] A poor debtor in Israel sometimes sold his children, or was compelled to sell himself into service. Cp. Exod. xxi. 7; Lev. xxv. 39; Neh. v. 4, 5; Matt. xviii. 25. The creditor in this narrative claims a right given by custom.

4. *pour out*] The woman is to pour out the oil she already has into the borrowed vessels. The Peshitta (best MSS.) represents the matter differently: *pour into all these vessels water, and bring up the full vessel to me.* According to this translation the miracle consists in a change of water into oil as the vessels are brought before the prophet.

6. *the oil stayed*] The amount of oil given corresponds with the obedient energy of the woman in borrowing vessels. So in xiii. 18, 19 ('he smote thrice, and stayed') the number of victories granted to Israel over Syria corresponds to the number of times the king of Israel struck the ground with his arrows. Both incidents tell of a testing of faith; to both the king and the woman it happens according to the energy of their faith.

8—17. THE HOSPITALITY OF THE WOMAN OF SHUNEM.

8. *Shunem*] A few miles north of Jezreel on the northern border of the 'great plain' of Jezreel. It belonged to the tribe of Issachar

was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. And she said unto her husband, 9 Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make, I pray thee, 10 a little chamber [1]on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither. And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he 11 turned into the chamber and lay there. And he said to 12 Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him. And he said unto him, 13 Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast [2]been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people. And he said, What then is to be done for her? And 14 Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no son, and her husband is old. And he said, Call her. And when he had called 15

[1] Or, *with walls* [2] Or, *shewed us all this reverence*

(Josh. xix. 18); the Philistines pitched there before the battle of Gilboa (1 Sam. xxviii. 4). It is represented by the modern Sūlem (Solam).

a great woman] *Great* means *wealthy* as in 1 Sam. xxv. 2; 2 Sam. xix. 32; owing to her great position in Shunem she was known simply as *the Shunammite* (*vv.* 12, 25, 36).

10. *on the wall*] Better as marg., **with walls.** She proposes to build a permanent chamber, and not a mere booth.

a table] Heb. *shulḥān.* The exact nature of this piece of furniture is not known. The Heb. word means something *spread out*, so that the original *shulḥān* may have been, like the Arabic *sofra*, simply a skin spread out on the ground. The tables used by the modern fellahin of Palestine are however flat-topped stands, 'mostly round, and rarely more than twelve inches high.' Those who eat from them sit on the floor. See A. Macalister, TABLE, in Hastings' *Dictionary.*

a candlestick] Rather, **a lampstand**; LXX. λυχνίαν (Matt. v. 15).

12. *she stood before him*] As ready to wait upon him. Cp. 1 K. x. 8, note.

13. *I dwell among mine own people*] Cp. viii. 1; 3, note. This phrase implies safety and honour and ease. Compare the splendid description of 'dwelling at home' given in Job xxxi. The Shunammite refuses all reward, and departs. Elisha then consults Gehazi.

16 her, she stood in the door. And he said, At this season,
when the time [1]cometh round, thou shalt embrace a son.
And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie
17 unto thine handmaid. And the woman conceived, and bare
a son at that season, when the time came round, as Elisha
18 had said unto her. And when the child was grown, it fell
19 on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. And
he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said
20 to his servant, Carry him to his mother. And when he had
taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her
21 knees till noon, and then died. And she went up, and laid
him on the bed of the man of God, and shut *the door* upon
22 him, and went out. And she called unto her husband, and
said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the servants, and one of
the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come
23 again. And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day?
it is neither new moon nor sabbath. And she said, [2]It shall
24 be well. Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant,
Drive, and go forward; slacken me not the riding, except I

[1] Heb. *liveth*, or, *reviveth* [2] Heb. *Peace*

15. *she stood in the door*] Shewing her unwillingness to entertain the suggestion of any reward; contrast the expression used in *v.* 12, 'she stood before him.'

16. *when the time cometh round*] Cp. Gen. xviii. 10.

18—37. The raising of the Shunammite's son to life.

The child, when old enough to walk, slips away from his mother to join his father in the harvest field, and is struck down by the hot sunshine.

21. *shut* the door *upon him*] Apparently she kept his death a secret from her husband.

22. *that I may run...and come again*] The distance from Shunem to the nearest point of Mount Carmel, as the crow flies, is about 15 miles; the journey of the Shunammite was therefore of about 20 miles—four hours perhaps.

23. *new moon...sabbath*] Cp. Num. xxviii. 9, 11; Isa. i. 13. Carmel was a centre of worship; an altar of the LORD stood there of old (1 K. xviii. 30).

It shall be well] The Heb. word, *Shālōm*, 'peace' is used as an exclamation, and may be differently translated, e.g. in *v.* 26, 'It is well'; in v. 22; 2 Sam. xviii. 28, 'All is well.'

bid thee. So she went, and came unto the man of God to 25
mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God
saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold,
yonder is the Shunammite: run, I pray thee, now to meet 26
her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with
thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered,
It is well. And when she came to the man of God to the 27
hill, she caught hold of his feet. And Gehazi came near to
thrust her away; but the man of God said, Let her alone:
for her soul is [1]vexed within her; and the LORD hath hid it
from me, and hath not told me. Then she said, Did I desire a 28
son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me? Then he 29
said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine
hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not;
and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my
staff upon the face of the child. And the mother of the 30
child said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will
not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her. And 31
Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the
face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor [2]hearing.
Wherefore he returned to meet him, and told him, saying,
The child is not awaked. And when Elisha was come into 32
the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his
bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them 33
twain, and prayed unto the LORD. And he went up, and 34

[1] Heb. *bitter* [2] Heb. *attention*

26. *she answered, It is well*] She will tell no one, but Elisha himself.

27. *she caught hold of* (clung to) *his feet*] Her action expressed her resolve that he should not move, until she had opened all her heart to him. Cp. *v.* 30.

29. *take my staff*] Elisha expresses by a symbol his determination to come himself. There is nothing to shew that he expected a wonder to be wrought by means of the staff, as by Moses' rod (Exod. vii. 19).

salute him not] Cp. our Lord's direction to the Seventy in Luke x. 4. Eastern salutations are formal and ceremonious quite different in character from the (often hasty) greetings of the West.

31. *The child is not awaked*] Gehazi speaks as one who had expected the staff to work a wonder.

33. *shut the door*] He shut out weeping, and shut in prayer.

prayed] As Elijah over the son of the widow of Zarephath (1 K. xvii. 21).

lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he [1]stretched himself upon him; and the flesh of the child
35 waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house once to and fro; and went up, and [1]stretched himself upon him: [2]and the child sneezed seven times, and the child
36 opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was
37 come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground; and she took up her son, and went out.
38 And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the
39 prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of
40 pottage: for they knew them not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O man of God,

[1] Or, *bowed himself* [2] Or, *and embraced the child*

34. *lay upon the child*] Elijah in like manner 'stretched himself upon the child.'

stretched himself] Rather as marg., **bowed himself**, i.e. in the attitude of earnest supplication; the same Heb. word is used in 1 K. xviii. 42.

35. *and the child sneezed*] The meaning of the Heb. expression is very doubtful.

38—44. Elisha at Gilgal during the Dearth.

38. *Gilgal*] Cp. ii. 1, note.

pottage] Cp. Gen. xxv. 29, 34.

39. *a wild vine*] Vulg. *quasi uitem siluestrem*, 'as it were a wild vine.' The plant, according to the description of the finder, resembled an untrained vine. In some English dialects a *vine* means "any trailing plant, esp. a fruit-bearing one" (J. Wright, *s.v.*).

wild gourds] Probably the fruit of *Citrullus Colocynthis*, a slender scabrous plant bearing as fruit a gourd of the size and shape of an orange. The pulp of this has an intensely bitter taste, which would suggest poison to the Hebrews. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 32, 33; and the article WILD GOURDS by N. McLean in *Encyclopaedia Biblica*.

there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof.
But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; 41
and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat.
And there was no [1]harm in the pot.

And there came a man from Baal-shalishah, and brought 42
the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of
barley, and fresh ears of corn in [2]his sack. And he said,
Give unto the people, that they may eat. And his [3]servant 43
said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? But
he said, Give the people, that they may eat; for thus saith
the LORD, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. So he 44
set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof,
according to the word of the LORD.

Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, 5
was a great man [4]with his master, and honourable, because
by him the LORD had given [5]victory unto Syria: he was

[1] Heb. *evil thing* [2] Or, *the husk thereof* [3] Or, *minister*
[4] Heb. *before* [5] Heb. *salvation*

41. *and he said, Pour out*] The words according to LXX. are spoken to Gehazi, for the imperative is in the singular; above ('bring meal') the plural is used.

42. *Baal-shalishah*] 'Bethsarisa' (so named in LXX.) is described by Eusebius in his *Onomasticon* as a village fifteen (Roman) miles north of Diospolis (Lydda) *in regione Thamnitica*, i.e. on the western side of Mount Ephraim. If we accept this identification, we should also identify the *Gilgal* of *v.* 38 with the western site mentioned in the note on ii. 1.

firstfruits] Cp. Exod. xxiii. 19; xxxiv. 26. Such an offering was an appropriate one to make to a prophet.

fresh ears of corn] LXX. παλάθας, 'cakes of preserved fruit.' The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain, and the text doubtful.

in his sack] Vulg. *in pera sua*, 'in his wallet'; Pesh. *in his garment*. The meaning of the Heb. word is doubtful.

43. *his servant*] Cp. 1 K. x. 5.

thus saith the LORD] In this incident (*vv.* 42—44) a supernatural intervention is clearly recognised; the preceding incident (*vv.* 38—41) however stands on a different footing, and may be construed as a natural event.

CH. V. THE LEPROSY OF NAAMAN.

1—7. NAAMAN SENT TO THE KING OF ISRAEL.

1. *honourable*] Lit. *one whose face* (or *person*) *was accepted*. He was favoured by his king.

2 also a mighty man of valour, *but he was* a leper. And the
Syrians had gone out in bands, and had brought away
captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she
3 [1]waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress,
Would God my lord were [2]with the prophet that is in
4 Samaria! then would he recover him of his leprosy. And
[3]one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said
5 the maid that is of the land of Israel. And the king of
Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king
of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents
of silver, and six thousand [4]*pieces* of gold, and ten changes
6 of raiment. And he brought the letter to the king of Israel,
saying, And now when this letter is come unto thee, behold,
I have sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest

[1] Heb. *was before* [2] Heb. *before* [3] Or, *he* [4] Or, shekels

2. *in bands*] Heb. *gĕdūdim*. LXX. μονόζωνοι, 'lightly armed' as robbers or liers in wait; Vulg. *latrunculi*. Cp. Gen. xlix. 19, R.V. marg.

3. *with the prophet*] LXX. (Lucian) adds *and would entreat him*. In the little maid's eyes the prophet is greater than the captain of the host; her suggestion is that Naaman should seek Elisha's presence.

recover] i.e. cure. Aldis Wright, *Bible Word-Book* (1884), quotes Shakespeare, *Tempest*, II. 2. 97, 'If all the wine in my bottle will *recover* him, I will help his ague.'

4. *one went in*] Better as marg., **he** (Naaman) **went in**; so Vulg. *told his lord*] i.e. told the king of Syria.

5. *ten talents of silver*] A. R. S. Kennedy in his article WEIGHTS AND MEASURES, Hastings' *Dictionary* IV. 902—6, concludes that there is evidence in the Old Testament for reckoning by three distinct units of weight, the Babylonian shekel of 252 grains, the new Syrian of 320 grains, and the Phœnician of 224 grains, each with its corresponding light shekel of 126, 160, and 112 grains respectively. The Babylonian talent contained certainly 3600 shekels, the new Syrian and the Phœnician each probably 3000 shekels. We have a choice therefore in the present passage of six different estimates of the value of the talent. If we take the intermediate estimate, that supplied by the Babylonian standard, the talent, if 'heavy,' weighed somewhat more than a cwt. avoirdupois.

ten changes of raiment] *Ten* is perhaps a round number here as in xiii. 7; Gen. xxiv. 55; xxxi. 7. For *changes of raiment* cp. Jud. xiv. 12.

6. *And now*] This opening presupposes that the ordinary greetings have been given.

recover him of his leprosy. And it came to pass, when the 7
king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes,
and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this
man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?
but consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh [1]a quarrel
against me. And it was so, when Elisha the man of God 8
heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he
sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy
clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that
there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his 9
horses and with his chariots, and stood at the door of the
house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, 10
saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh
shall come again to thee, and [2]thou shalt be clean. But 11
Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold,
I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand,
and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his
hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not 12

[1] Or, *an occasion* [2] Heb. *be thou clean*

7. *rent his clothes*] As at the receipt of bad news. Cp. xix. 1.

seeketh a quarrel] *Quarrel* is here used in the sense of *querela*, 'a cause of complaint.' Cp. Col. iii. 13, 'if any man have a quarrel against any,' A. V.

8—19. THE HEALING OF NAAMAN'S LEPROSY.

8. *he shall know*] Cp. Ezek. ii. 5.

9. *with his horses and with his chariots*] Nothing abated of his state, certainly not standing before the prophet, as the little maid pictured in *v.* 3.

10. *Go and wash in Jordan seven times*] A severe test of obedience. If Elisha was dwelling in Samaria or in the western Gilgal (cp. ii. 1, note), he sends Naaman a journey of some twenty miles without even seeing him. The sevenfold bathing in Jordan adds to the severity of the test. If Naaman thought to be cured as a matter of course, because his king was more powerful than the king of Israel, he was completely undeceived. Elisha shews no respect of persons.

thou shalt be clean] Heb. *be thou clean.* For the imperative cp. Mark i. 41; vii. 34; John v. 8. The word of healing is not a promise, but a *fiat*.

11. *and stand*] The attitude of prayer.

over the place] i.e. over the part of the body specially affected by the disease; LXX. 'he will put his hand upon the place.' The Jewish commentator Ralbag however explains the phrase as meaning *towards the place where Elisha worshipped* JEHOVAH.

[1]Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all
the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean?
13 So he turned and went away in a rage. And his servants
came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the
prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou
not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith
14 to thee, Wash, and be clean? Then went he down, and
dipped *himself* seven times in Jordan, according to the
saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like
15 unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. And he
returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and
came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold now,
I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel:
now therefore, I pray thee, take a [2]present of thy servant.
16 But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand,
I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but
17 he refused. And Naaman said, If not, yet I pray thee let
there be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth;
for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering
18 nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD. In this
thing the LORD pardon thy servant; when my master goeth

[1] Another reading is, *Amanah* [2] Heb. *blessing*

12. *Abanah*] This form, which is supported by LXX. and Vulg., is the 'written' text, the *Kĕthīb*; the *Ḳĕrī* or 'read' text has *Amanah*. The chief river of Damascus at the present day is the Baradā, the Chrysorrhoas of the Greeks. South of this the plain of Damascus is crossed by many streams, one of which, the al-Awaj, is usually identified with the Pharpar. These waters give a wonderful fertility and beauty to the neighbourhood.

13. *My father*] One speaks for the rest. For the title *father* cp. ii. 12; vi. 21; Gen. xlv. 8.

15. *and stood before him*] He does not on this occasion expect the prophet to come out, but he himself goes in and stands before the prophet as in the presence of a superior.

a present] Heb. *a blessing*, i.e. *a thank-offering*.

16. *but he refused*] Elisha by his previous action (*v.* 10) taught Naaman that the healing grace of the God of Israel is not controlled by respect of persons; he now teaches that it is not exercised for money.

17. *two mules' burden of earth*] With which to erect an altar (Exod. xx. 24). He had formerly despised the waters of Israel; he now desires its dust and stones. The request may seem superstitious, but the Israelite altar would serve as a memorial of his cure, and the sight of it would steady his new-found loyalty to JEHOVAH, whenever he felt the attraction of the House of Rimmon.

into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing. And he said unto him, 19
Go in peace. So he departed from him [1]a little way.

But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, 20
Behold, my master hath spared this Naaman the Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.
So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw 21
one running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well? And he said, All is 22
well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now

[1] Or, *some way*

18. *Rimmon*] He is called *Ramman* in cuneiform inscriptions, and *Hadad*. He was worshipped in Babylon, as well as in Syria, in a double character as the storm-god and a destroyer, and also as the rain-god and a beneficent deity. He was perhaps specially the God of Damascus, for in the royal family of that city are found such names as *Ben-hadad* (i.e. 'Son of the God Hadad') and *Tabrimmon* (i.e. 'Rimmon is propitious'). In Zech. xii. 11 Hadadrimmon seems to be identified with Tammuz (Adonis) the God of Spring.

19. *Go in peace*] Elisha seems thus tacitly to allow Naaman to 'halt between two opinions' (1 K. xviii. 21), but the time had not yet come when Israel might act as a missionary of the Divine Unity to the nations. For a few exceptional cases, exceptional leniency might as yet be practised.

a little way] The same Heb. phrase occurs in Gen. xxxv. 16. The exact meaning of it is doubtful.

20—27. THE SIN AND PUNISHMENT OF GEHAZI.

20. *Gehazi, the servant*] Pesh. and Targ. *Gehazi the disciple.* Gehazi stood to Elisha in the same relation as Elisha himself had stood to Elijah. Cp. iii. 11; 1 K. xix. 21. He was potentially Elisha's successor. His sin was a disciple's betrayal of his Master's confidence for a sum of money.

hath spared] Rather, held back, a strong expression.

somewhat] See 1 K. ii. 14; Luke vii. 40; Gal. ii. 6; Heb. viii. 3. The form *something* is rare in the English Bible (Gal. vi. 3).

22. *My master hath sent me*] In these words Gehazi destroyed the effects of Elisha's teaching that the blessing of the God of Israel was not to be bought with money. Naaman is now instructed that the prophet of JEHOVAH is ready to receive a reward, if it is conveyed to him with sufficient privacy and delicacy.

there be come to me from the hill country of Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets; give them, I pray
23 thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of raiment. And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of raiment, and laid them upon two of his servants;
24 and they bare them before him. And when he came to the [1]hill, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed.
25 But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said,
26 Thy servant went no whither. And he said unto him, [2]Went not mine heart *with thee*, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and menservants and maid-
27 servants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper *as white* as snow.

6 And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold

[1] Heb. *Ophel* [2] Or, *Mine heart went not* from me, *when &c.*

the hill country of Ephraim] Cp. 1 K. iv. 8, note.

23. *Be content*] This expression means, *Consent! Agree!* Cp. vi. 3. Naaman certainly supposed that under cover of a polite fiction he was giving this large sum to the prophet himself.

24. *the hill*] Heb. *Ophel*. It is perhaps the name of a place, but if so, it is of course to be distinguished from the *Ophel* which formed the south-east corner of Jerusalem (2 Chr. xxvii. 3).

25. *before his master*] Perhaps rather, *by his master*.

26. *Went not mine heart* with thee] So LXX. (μετὰ σοῦ). Better as marg., **Mine heart went not** [**from me**]. Cp. Pesh. *Mine heart shewed me*. The prophet says in effect, 'I did not lose my power as a seer.'

the man turned] Rather, **one turned**. The language is purposely vague, since Gehazi's guilty conscience would swiftly interpret it.

Is it a time to receive money] Elisha thought it rather a time to testify to the character of the God of Israel.

oliveyards &c.] The prophet reads Gehazi's thoughts of the use to which the money was to be put.

27. *a leper* as white *as snow*] Cp. Exod. iv. 6. A specially heavy punishment for the abuse of special privileges.

Ch. VI. 1—7. The axe's head.

1. *And the sons of the prophets*] The Acts of Elisha are not narrated in chronological order, for Gehazi who is dismissed from the

now, the place where we dwell before thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence 2
every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. And one said, 3
Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go. So he went with them. And when 4
they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one 5
was felling a beam, the axe-head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, my master! for it was borrowed.
And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed 6
him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither, and [1]made the iron to swim. And he said, Take 7
it up to thee. So he put out his hand, and took it.

Now the king of Syria warred against Israel; and he 8
took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my [2]camp. And the man of God sent 9
unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are coming down.
And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man 10
of God told him and warned him of; and he saved himself there, not once nor twice. And the heart of the king of 11

[1] Or, *the iron did swim* [2] Or, *encamping*

prophet's presence in v. 27 is spoken of as the prophet's servant in viii. 4. It may be therefore that vi. 1—7 is the continuation of iv. 38 ff., and that the scene is Gilgal.

the place where we dwell before thee] Or, *the place where we sit before thee*, i.e. the house or porch in which the sons of the prophets sat, when Elisha received them.

too strait] Vulg. (rightly) *angustus*, 'narrow.'

3. *Be content*] Cp. v. 23, note.

6. *a stick*] The Heb. word means *tree*; LXX. ξύλον, Vulg. *lignum*.

8—23. Elisha and the Syrians.

8. *shall be my camp*] Vulg. (giving a correct paraphrase) *ponamus insidias*, 'let us set an ambush.'

9. *the Syrians are coming down*] This expression gives a vivid picture of the scene: the king is not to use certain routes, for the Syrians hold the neighbouring heights ready to descend upon him from their place of vantage.

10. *sent to the place*] Reconnoitred the spot.

Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which
12 of us is for the king of Israel? And one of his servants said, Nay, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou
13 speakest in thy bedchamber. And he said, Go and see where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was
14 told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan. Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they
15 came by night, and compassed the city about. And when the [1]servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host with horses and chariots was round about the city. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my
16 master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with
17 them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about
18 Elisha. And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this [2]people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness accord-
19 ing to the word of Elisha. And Elisha said unto them,

[1] Or, *minister* [2] Heb. *nation*

11. *which of us is for the king*] The text of this passage is doubtful. LXX. (so Vulg.), 'who is betraying me to the king'; a rendering which implies a slightly different Heb. text.

12. *in thy bedchamber*] A proverbial expression for a secret place (Eccl. x. 20).

13. *Dothan*] LXX. Δωθάειμ, both here and in Gen. xxxvii. 17; Judith vii. 18. The true form is perhaps, *Dōthayin*. It is the modern *Tell Dothan* a little to the west of the direct route from *Sebastiyeh* (Samaria) to *Jenin*. Dothan itself is in a plain, but it is overlooked by hills (Judith vii. 18) both from the north and from the south.

15. *the servant of the man of God*] The verse would run more smoothly, if the words *the servant of* were omitted; so that the statement would be, Elisha went forth, ... and his servant said to him. But LXX. Vulg. support the Massoretic text.

17. *horses and chariots of fire*] Cp. ii. 11.

18. *blindness*] Heb. *sanvērim*, a word found only here and in Gen. xix. 11. LXX. ἀορασία in both places. It means here blindness of mind, as the sequel shews, not of eyes.

This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. And he led them to Samaria. And it came to pass, when they were 20
come into Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see. And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, they were in the midst of Samaria. And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, 21
when he saw them, My father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them? And he answered, Thou shalt not smite 22
them: wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master. And he prepared great provision for them: 23
and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. And the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.

19. *he led them to Samaria*] There is nothing improbable in this story, if we acknowledge that Elisha possessed beyond most men self-possession and readiness of speech and action. The real difficulty of the account is the moral difficulty; How could a prophet use this deceit, how could he ask his God to aid him in it? The answer to which is that to deceive an enemy was considered by no one at this time to be wrong, and if the device was not wrong, there was no reason against praying for Divine aid in carrying it out. Elisha in this point was only not in advance of his age. Cp. 1 K. xxii. 20—22.

20. *when they were come into Samaria*] We may assume that in the course of the ten mile march from Dothan to Samaria Elisha managed to communicate with the king, so that the Syrians would find themselves ambushed on their arrival.

21. *My father*] Cp. v. 13, note.

22. *Thou shalt not smite them*] If ordinary prisoners of war were not to be killed, how much less these Syrians whom God Himself had delivered to Israel as guests. The prophet's remonstrance implies clearly that it was not usual to put prisoners of war to death. The unmercifulness of Eastern warriors in general and of Hebrew warriors in particular has been much exaggerated. The terrible instances of massacre which can be quoted from the history of Israel can be paralleled from the history of Greece, and even from the (mediaeval) history of England.

bread and water] Cp. 1 K. xiii. 19, note.

23. *the bands*] Cp. v. 2, note.

came no more] This statement is too definite, unless we assume that this incident took place as late as the reign of Joash the grandson of Jehu. Cp. xiii. 3; 14—19, 22.

24 And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of
Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged
25 Samaria. And there was a great famine in Samaria: and,
behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for
fourscore [1]*pieces* of silver, and the fourth part of a kab of
26 dove's dung for five [1]*pieces* of silver. And as the king of
Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman
27 unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king. And he said,
[2]If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee?
28 out of the threshing-floor, or out of the winepress? And

[1] Or, shekels [2] Or, *Nay, let the* LORD *help thee!*

24.—CH. VII. 2. SAMARIA UNDER SIEGE AND FAMINE.

24. *Ben-hadad*] Though the Syrian king is named, the king of Israel is not, but he was probably Joram the son of Ahab. Cp. *v.* 32. It is on the other hand possible that the Israelite king was Jehoahaz the son of Jehu and the Syrian king a later Ben-hadad, who reigned in Elisha's old age. The order certainly is not chronological. Cp. *v.* 1, note.

KINGS OF SYRIA MENTIONED.	CONTEMPORARY KINGS OF ISRAEL.
Ben-hadad (1 K. xx. 1, 2)	Ahab
,, (2 K. vi. 24; viii. 7 ff.)	Joram (?)
Hazael (2 K. viii. 28)	Joram
,, (2 K. x. 32)	Jehu
,, (2 K. xiii. 3)	Jehoahaz
Ben-hadad (2 K. xiii. 3)	,,
,, (2 K. xiii. 24, 25)	Jehoash (Joash)

25. *the fourth part*] This is the regular term in the Bible (A. V. and R. V.). *Quarter* is not used in this sense.

kab] About half a gallon; 180 *kab* went to the *cor* mentioned in 1 K. iv. 22 (see note there).

of dove's dung] So LXX. Vulg. The expression is probably in its origin proverbial, and not to be taken literally. Another suggestion is that the Heb. word (found here only) is the name of some kind of grain, e.g. spelt.

27. *If the* LORD *do not help thee*] Marg. *Nay, let the* LORD *help thee!* If the text is correct, this alternative translation is to be accepted just as it stands, but it is better to follow a slight correction of the Heb. text. The verse should probably run, *And he said* unto her (LXX. αὐτῇ), *The* LORD *help thee!* This expression amounts to a refusal of help, just as *Allah ya'ṭik* ('May God give thee!') is a formula for repulsing beggars in modern Syria.

the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow. So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto 29
her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son. And it came to pass, when the 30
king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; (now he was passing by upon the wall;) and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh. Then he said, God do so to me, and more also, if the head 31
of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day. But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him; 32
and *the king* sent a man from before him: but ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and [1]hold the door fast against him: is not the sound of his master's feet behind him? And while he yet talked with them, 33
behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, this evil is of the LORD; why should I wait for the LORD any longer? And Elisha said, Hear ye the word 7
of the LORD: thus saith the LORD, To-morrow about this

[1] Heb. *thrust him back with the door*

29. *and did eat him*] Cp. Lam. ii. 20.

31. *God do so to me*] Cp. 1 K. xix. 2.

32. *the elders sat with him*] Having come to consult the prophet in their extremity. Cp. Ezek. xiv. 1.

this son of a murderer] If the phrase is to be understood literally, the 'murderer' is probably Ahab (cp. ix. 7, 26), and the murderer's son Joram, but in Eastern idiom it may mean no more than 'This murderer.' Joram is a 'murderer' in intention.

is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?] Elisha knows Joram's vacillating character, and concludes that the king will try to recall or delay his own order.

33. *and he said*] The words which follow are the king's, but the account seems to be abbreviated at this point, and it is uncertain whether the messenger uttered them or Joram himself.

why should I wait for the LORD any longer?] From this speech we conclude that Elisha had promised the LORD's help for the city, and had counselled the king not to surrender to the Syrians.

time shall a [1]measure of fine flour be *sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.
2 Then the captain on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.
3 Now there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we
4 here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city,

[1] Heb. *seah*

CH. VII.

1. *a measure*] Heb. *sĕāh*. Cp. Matt. xiii. 33 (σάτα τρία). It contained six *kab*, and was the thirtieth part of a *cor*. See 1 K. iv. 22, note. In English measure it would be about 3 gallons. The intrinsic value of the *shekel* which purchased the *sĕāh* was 2*s*. 9*d*., if the Phœnician (heavy) shekel be meant, but the Babylonian *shekel* was of course somewhat more valuable. Cp. v. 5, note.

2. *the captain*] The Heb. word has been supposed to signify the *third* person in a chariot. Thus, in the king's chariot the first person would be the king, the second the driver, and the third the king's favourite officer. The 'captain' here mentioned may have been such an officer. But the term *the captains* is sometimes used as though it denoted a special body of men, e.g. the picked members of the body-guard, who manned the king's chariots in any capacity. Cp. x. 25; 1 K. ix. 22; Exod. xiv. 7; 2 Sam. xxiii. 8.

on whose hand the king leaned] The confidential counsellor who was continually at the king's side. Cp. v. 18 (of Naaman).

Behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might this thing be?] Rather (since the Hebrew consists of two distinct utterances), **Behold, the LORD is about to make windows in heaven! Can this thing be?** The first is a mocking assertion, the second an unbelieving question (so LXX.). There is no *if* after *Behold* in the Hebrew.

make windows in heaven] Targ. 'open windows and send down good things from heaven.' For the expression *windows* cp. Gen. vii. 11.

3—20. FAMINE FOLLOWED BY UNEXPECTED PLENTY.

3. *at the entering in of the gate*] Cp. Lev. xiii. 46, which prescribes that the dwelling of the leper is to be 'without the camp'; also Luke xvii. 12, where our Lord meets ten lepers near the entrance to a village. Lepers were not driven very far away, but were compelled to occupy separate dwellings.

then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. And 5 they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the outermost part of the camp of the Syrians, behold, there was no man there. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear 6 a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore 7 they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life. And when these lepers came to 8 the outermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold,

5. *in the twilight*] Cp. *v.* 7. The Heb. *nesheph* is used both of the morning and of the evening twilight. The Syrians fled unnoticed by the garrison of Samaria in the evening twilight, and the lepers must have reached the camp almost as soon as the Syrians left it. It was still 'night' (*v.* 12) when the lepers' news reached the king. The distance from the walls to 'the outermost part of the camp' need not have been more than 200 or 300 yards.

6. *hath hired*] Cp. xvi. 7—9; 1 K. xv. 18—20.

the kings of the Hittites] Cp. 1 K. ix. 20; x. 29.

the kings of the Egyptians] The reign of Joram of Israel lies between two dates fixed from Assyrian sources, i.e. between 854 B.C. when Ahab fought at the battle of Karkar and 842 B.C. when Jehu[1] (perhaps in the first year of his reign) paid tribute to Shalmaneser II. The king of Egypt contemporary with Joram would therefore probably be Takerat II. whose reign Flinders Petrie (*History of Egypt*, vol. III., page 228) assigns to about 856—837 B.C. Takerat belonged to the Twenty-second Dynasty under which there was a system of co-regency between the king and the heir apparent. Thus Takerat II. was associated with his father, Uasarkon (Osorkon) II., during the last five years of his father's reign, and during the last six years of Takerat II. his successor Sheshenq III. was associated with him. Thus under the Twenty-second Dynasty it was natural to speak of *the kings* rather than of *the king* of Egypt.

[1] The *Ia-u-a son of Humri* (*Omri*) of Shalmaneser's inscription is usually identified with *Jehu*, but it is possible that *Jehoram* (*Joram*) is meant.

and raiment, and went and hid it; and they came back, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went
9 and hid it. Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, [1]punishment will overtake us: now therefore come, let us go and tell the
10 king's household. So they came and called unto the [2]porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but the horses tied, and the asses tied,
11 and the tents as they were. And [3]he called the porters;
12 and they told it to the king's household within. And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we be hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall take them alive, and get into
13 the city. And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left [4]in the city, (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it; behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are consumed:) and let us send and see.
14 They took therefore two chariots with horses; and the king
15 sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see. And

[1] Or, *our iniquity will find us out*
[2] Or, *porters*
[3] Or, *the porters called*
[4] Heb. *in it*

9. *punishment will overtake us*] Marg. *our iniquity will find us out.* Cp. Num. xxxii. 23, 'Be sure your sin will find you out.' The Heb. word for *iniquity* ('āvōn) connotes also *punishment for iniquity*, and the same is true of the word for *sin*.

10. *the porter*] Marg. *the porters.* In Hebrew a substantive in the singular may often be translated as a collective. LXX. (reading the word with different vowels), 'towards the gate'; this may be right.

11. *he called the porters*] Better as marg., **the porters called** (so LXX.).

12. *to hide themselves*] Cp. iii. 24, note; vi. 9, note.

13. *that are consumed*] i.e. that are reduced to skin and bone. The horses might be risked, for they were almost valueless.

14. *two chariots with horses*] LXX. (perhaps from a different reading of the Hebrew) *two mounted men*, a better scouting party than *two chariots*.

they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king. And the people went out, and spoiled the 16
camp of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was *sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD. And the king appointed 17
the captain on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him. And it came to pass, as the 18
man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to-morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria; and that captain answered the man of God, and 19
said, Now, behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? and he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof: it 20
came to pass even so unto him; for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

Now Elisha had spoken unto the woman, whose son 8
he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years. And the woman arose, 2
and did according to the word of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years. And it came to pass at the seven 3

15. *vessels*] Heb. *kēlīm*, a word rendered *weapons* in Gen. xxvii. 3; *baggage* in 1 Sam. xvii. 22; *instruments* passim. It may be compared with our word *things*.

in their haste] Or, *in their alarm*. Cp. Ps. cxvi. 11 (with marg.).

17 *trode upon him*] It may be that he attempted to stop the people from going out and plundering the camp.

CH. VIII. 1—6. THE LATER HISTORY OF THE SHUNAMMITE.

1. *sojourn*] This word implies residence in a foreign land (Ruth i. 1). Vulg. *peregrinare*.

seven years] Cp. Gen. xli. 27; 2 Sam. xxiv. 13. Famines were common, being due to three separate causes, war, drought, and locusts.

2. *the land of the Philistines*] The low-lying coast-lands were (and are) more fertile than the 'mountains of Israel,' and so were able

years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines. and she went forth to cry unto the king for her
4 house and for her land. Now the king was talking with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.
5 And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored to life him that was dead, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored
6 to life. And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain [1]officer, saying, Restore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now.
7 And Elisha came to Damascus; and Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, The
8 man of God is come hither. And the king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go meet the

[1] Or, *eunuch*

to hold out longer against famine. Other places of refuge were Egypt (Gen. xii. 10), Moab (Ruth i. 1), and the Zidonian territory (1 K. xvii. 9).

3. *the woman*] She is not called a widow, and nothing is said about her husband, but this agrees with the representation given in iv. 8. Here we have probably a trace of the old Semitic customs of kinship and marriage according to which a woman, though she had a husband, retained her freedom, and her property, and her place in her own tribe. Cp. iv. 13; 1 K. vii. 13.

4. *Gehazi*] The appearance of Gehazi here shews that we must assign this incident to an earlier date than the healing of Naaman in ch. v.

6. *officer*] Marg. *eunuch*. Cp. xxv. 19; 1 K. xxii. 9. The more general rendering is probably correct here, but in ix. 32 the special sense is to be preferred.

7—15. Elisha at Damascus.

(See note on 1 K. xix. 15, 16.)

7. *came to Damascus*] Elisha has no fear among the Syrians, for a prophet is a privileged person even outside his own country. Cp. 1 K. xix. 15. Even the account in vi. 13 ff. does not imply that the Syrians wished to do any harm to Elisha.

Ben-hadad] Cp. vi. 24, note; also the introductory note to 1 K. xx.

8. *Hazael*] Nothing is said as to Hazael's position, nor is it said whether he was related to Ben-hadad or not, but he was known in Israel.

a present] It is commonly used of an *offering* made to God, but

man of God, and inquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this sickness? So Hazael went to meet 9
him, and took a present [1]with him, [2]even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Ben-hadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this sickness? And Elisha said unto him, Go, [3]say unto him, 10
Thou shalt surely recover; howbeit the LORD hath shewed me that he shall surely die. And he settled his countenance 11
stedfastly *upon him*, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept. And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? 12
And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash in pieces their little ones, and rip up their women with child. And Hazael said, But what is thy 13
servant, which is but a dog, that he should do this great

[1] Heb. *in his hand* [2] Or, *and* [3] According to another reading, *say, Thou shalt not recover: for the* LORD *&c.*

it occurs in 1 K. x. 25 of tribute brought to a king. Cp. v. 15; 1 K. xiv. 3.

9. *stood before him*] Cp. v. 15.

Thy son Ben-hadad] Similarly in xiii. 14 the king of Israel addresses Elisha as, 'My father!'

10. *say unto him, Thou shalt surely recover; howbeit &c.*] Another reading of the Hebrew, with the change of a single letter, is, *say, Thou shalt not recover: for.* The Heb. word *lo* means either *unto him* or *not* according as the final silent letter is *aleph* or *vāv*. The more difficult reading, that of the text, is to be preferred. Elisha reads Hazael's purpose, and reveals it in its true character. He will be a murderer, for his master is on the road to recovery.

11. *he settled his countenance stedfastly* upon him] Cp. Luke xxii. 56. The prophet gazes upon the Syrian forgetful of all but his own vision of the future until Hazael becomes confused.

12. *the evil that thou wilt do*] Cp. x. 32 f.; xii. 17; xiii. 3, 22.

wilt thou set on fire] Wood was freely used in ancient fortifications, particularly about the gates. One of the common methods therefore of attacking a stronghold was to attempt to set fire to it. Cp. Jud. ix. 48, 49; 1 Macc. v. 5. On the Assyrian reliefs the soldiers are often represented applying torches to the walls of fortresses.

rip up] This is mentioned as the extremity of cruelty. Cp. xv. 16; Amos i. 13.

13. *which is but a dog*] This is the ordinary language of Eastern self-depreciation; it is no indication of humility in Hazael. David calls

thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me
14 that thou shalt be king over Syria. Then he departed from
Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What
said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that
15 thou shouldest surely recover. And it came to pass on the
morrow, that he took the coverlet, and dipped it in water,
and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael
reigned in his stead.
16 And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king
of Israel, [1]Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram
the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign.
17 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign;
18 and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he walked
in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab:
for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he did that
19 which was evil in the sight of the LORD. Howbeit the LORD
would not destroy Judah, for David his servant's sake, as he

[1] Some ancient authorities omit the words *Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah*

himself a *dead dog* in 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. A.V. (*Is thy servant a dog?*) is quite wrong.

this great thing] Hazael admires that at which Elisha weeps.

16—24 (2 Chr. xxi. 5—10, 20). THE REIGN OF JEHORAM (JORAM) OVER JUDAH.

16. *in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab*] There is some confusion about this date. According to iii. 1 which agrees with 1 K. xxii. 51 Jehoram of Israel came to the throne in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat, after reigning seven years longer, twenty-five years in all, was succeeded by his son, Jehoram (1 K. xxii. 42, 50). According to this reckoning Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat began to reign in the *seventh* year of Jehoram king of Israel. On the other hand the date given here (*v.* 16) agrees with that given in *v.* 25. Jehoram becomes king in the *fifth* year of his Israelite namesake, and is succeeded by his son Ahaziah in the *twelfth* year, two dates which give according to the Heb. (inclusive) reckoning *eight* years for his reign in agreement with *v.* 17.

18. *the daughter of Ahab*] Athaliah, who afterwards usurped the throne (*v.* 26; xi. 1—20).

that which was evil] At his accession he put his brethren to death (2 Chr. xxi. 4, 13).

19. *Judah*] In Chron. *the house of David*, a reading which agrees better with the rest of the verse.

promised him to give unto him a lamp [1]for his children alway. In his days Edom revolted from under the hand 20
of Judah, and made a king over themselves. Then Joram 21
passed over to Zair, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him about, and the captains of the chariots: and the people fled to their tents. So Edom revolted from under the hand 22
of Judah, unto this day. Then did Libnah revolt at the same time. And the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that 23
he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of

[1] Another reading is, *and to his children*

a lamp] LXX. λύχνον. Thus figuratively applied (1 K. xi. 36; xv. 4) the Heb. word is written *nīr*; in the ordinary sense it is *nēr*. The *lamp* was both indispensable and conspicuous (Matt. v. 15); like our word *hearth* it denotes the *home*. The light kept burning was a sign that all was well. Cp. Prov. xxxi. 18. The removal of the light on the other hand was a sign of the desolation of the home. Cp. Job xviii. 6; Jer. xxv. 10 (where *the light of the candle* should be *the light of the lamp*). *To give a lamp* is (in Shakespeare's phrase) to *give a local habitation*. Contrast the denunciation of 'Babylon' in Rev. xviii. 23, 'The light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in thee.'

for his children] So some editions of the Heb. Bible and LXX. Most authorities read, *and to his children* (*sons*).

20. *revolted*] Cp. 1 K. xxii. 47.

21. *to Zair*] Jerome, *Onomasticon* (*s.v.* Bala = 'Bela,'), says: 'It is now called Zoara and is the only one of the five cities of Sodom preserved through the prayers of Lot. It overlooks the Dead Sea and has a garrison of Roman soldiers....There are indications of its ancient fertility in the neighbourhood.' As no city *Zair* is known, and as this *Zoara* lay at the south end of the Dead Sea in or close to Edomite territory, it is probable that the true reading is *to Zoar*. Josephus (*Wars* IV. § 482) calls the place 'Zoara of Arabia.' Cp. G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, p. 506, note 6.

and he rose up...their tents] Render, **and it came to pass, that, when he rose up,** etc. **the people fled to their tents.** Jehoram's doings are described in a temporal or circumstantial clause; the main fact was that 'the people,' i.e. the bulk of the army, scattered to their homes, when the king was in difficulties. Thus the campaign failed.

and the captains of the chariots] These words break the construction of the Hebrew and are perhaps a gloss.

22. *Libnah*] The site is at present unidentified; it was a fortress, and a priestly city (1 Chr. vi. 57), probably not far from Lachish (*Tell-el-Hesy*) in the south or south-west of Judah (xix. 8; Josh. x. 29, 31).

24 the kings of Judah? And Joram slept with his fathers, and
was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Ahaziah
his son reigned in his stead.
25 In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of
Israel did Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin
26 to reign. Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he
began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem.
And his mother's name was Athaliah the [1]daughter of Omri
27 king of Israel. And he walked in the way of the house of
Ahab, and did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD,
as did the house of Ahab: for he was the son in law of the
28 house of Ahab. And he went with Joram the son of Ahab
to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth-gilead: and
29 the Syrians wounded Joram. And king Joram returned to
be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had
given him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king
of Syria. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah
went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because
he was sick.

[1] Or, *granddaughter*. See ver. 18

24. *slept with his fathers*] In 2 Chr. xxi 20, 'he departed without being desired; and they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.'

25—29 (cp. 2 Chr. xxii. 2—6). AHAZIAH KING OF JUDAH.

26. *the daughter*] Really as marg., **granddaughter**.

27. *the way of the house of Ahab*] This included Baal-worship. Cp xi. 18; 1 K. xvi. 31.

28. *Hazael*] Cp. 7—15; vi. 24, note.

Ramoth-gilead] Cp. ix. 1 ff.; 1 K. iv. 13, note.

29. *to see Joram*] Similarly his grandfather Jehoshaphat visited Ahab (1 K. xxii. 2), Joram's father.

CH. IX. 1—13. THE ANOINTING OF JEHU.

In 1 K. xxi. 21, 22 Elijah announced that the dynasty of Ahab would be utterly swept away like that of Jeroboam and that of Baasha. Upon Ahab's repentance however the doom was postponed (1 K. xxi. 27—29). In the present chapter nothing is said of a fresh revelation of the Divine will on this matter, but Elisha seems to act on his own initiative, perhaps from a memory of the charge given to his predecessor in 1 K. xix. 15, 16, or from a belief that the accession of Hazael in Syria was a

And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the 9
prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take
this vial of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead.
And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son 2
of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him
arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner
chamber. Then take the vial of oil, and pour it on his 3
head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee
king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and tarry
not. So the young man, even the young man the prophet, 4
went to Ramoth-gilead. And when he came, behold, the 5
captains of the host were sitting; and he said, I have an
errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which
of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain. And he arose, 6
and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his
head, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, the God
of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the
LORD, even over Israel. And thou shalt smite the house 7
of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my
servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of
the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house 8

Divine signal for action to be taken in Israel. It is probable that he, with his fiery character, mistook the Divine will, and struck, when he should have waited. Cp. 1 K. xix. 15, 16, note.

1. *one of the sons of the prophets*] If Elisha had gone in person to Ramoth, Joram's suspicions would have been aroused (so the Greek Commentator, Theodoret). Cp. 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 2.

Gird up thy loins] For running. Cp. iv. 29. There is to be no delay.

vial] LXX. φακόν, Vulg. *lenticulum*, 'a flask.'

2. *Jehu*] Cp. 1 K. xix. 16.

his brethren] i.e. his companions.

3. *and tarry not*] Elisha designed a lightning stroke; the delivery of his message to Jehu should not have occupied more than five minutes.

5. *I have an errand*] Or, *I have a word.*

And Jehu said] It was characteristic of Jehu to take the lead.

7. *And thou shalt smite*] If the prophet-messenger spoke all the words that follow down to *there shall be none to bury her* (*v.* 10), he exceeded Elisha's instructions, but it is more probable that they are the addition of the compiler giving his interpretation of Elisha's own brief direction. Certainly *vv.* 8—10 have the appearance of being comment.

of Ahab shall perish: and I will cut off from Ahab every
man child, and him that is shut up and him that is left at
9 large in Israel. And I will make the house of Ahab like
the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house
10 of Baasha the son of Ahijah. And the dogs shall eat
Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none
11 to bury her. And he opened the door, and fled. Then
Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and one said
unto him, Is all well? wherefore came this mad fellow to
thee? And he said unto them, Ye know the man and what
12 his talk was. And they said, It is false; tell us now. And
he said, Thus and thus spake he to me, saying, Thus saith
13 the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then
they hasted, and took every man his garment, and put it

8. *him that is shut up &c.*] See 1 K. xiv. 10, note. The phrase means, 'all persons whatsoever in Israel that are connected with the house of Ahab.'

9. *like the house of Jeroboam*] Cp. 1 K. xv. 29.

like the house of Baasha] Cp. 1 K. xvi. 11.

10. *the dogs shall eat Jezebel*] So 1 K. xxi. 23.

in the portion of Jezreel] So also *vv.* 36, 37. *Portion* = Heb. *ḥēleḳ*; LXX. μερίδι. In 1 K. xxi. 23 (see note), *by the rampart of Jezreel. Rampart* = Heb. *ḥēl*; LXX. προτειχίσματι. The reading *ḥēleḳ*, 'portion' has probably been introduced here and in *vv.* 36, 37, through a confusion with the phrase used in *v.* 25. But different things are meant.

11. *to the servants of his lord*] The prophet had called them Jehu's *brethren*, i.e. his comrades; a moment would now shew whether they would remain faithful to their king, Joram, or follow Jehu.

this mad fellow] LXX. ὁ ἐπίληπτος οὗτος, *this epileptic.* 'Mad,' because of the haste and excitement with which he came and with which he departed. In Heb. the word here used for *mad*, and in *v.* 20 for *furiously* come from the same root. But in addition to this the ecstasies into which prophets fell, and the occasional strangeness of their actions gave them a name for madness. Cp. Jer. xxix. 26; also 1 Sam. xix. 18—24.

Ye know] They might perhaps have guessed from the traces of the anointing oil upon him.

12. *Thus and thus*] The expression is emphatic, and prepares the way for an important announcement. Indeed Jehu staked his life on the words which follow.

13. *Then they hasted*] They at once accepted Jehu as king.

his garment] i.e. the long outer garment. Cp. Matt. xxi. 7, 'They... put on them (on the ass and the colt) their garments,' τὰ ἱμάτια.

under him [1]on the top of the stairs, and blew the trumpet, saying, Jehu is king. So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the 14
son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. (Now Joram kept
Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king
of Syria: but king [2]Joram was returned to be healed in 15
Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him,
when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.) And Jehu
said, If this be your mind, then let none escape and go
forth out of the city, to go to tell it in Jezreel. So Jehu 16
rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Joram lay there.
And Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram.
Now the watchman stood on the tower in Jezreel, and he 17
spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see
a company. And Joram said, Take an horseman, and send
to meet them, and let him say, [3]Is it peace? So there went 18
one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the

[1] Or, *on the bare steps* [2] Heb. *Jehoram*, and in *vv.* 17, 21, 22, 23, 24
[3] Or, *Is all well?*

on the top of the stairs] Ramoth-gilead ('Heights of Gilead') was doubtless situated on a hill, and 'the stairs' were probably some well-known ascent, either within the city or leading up to the gate of the city from without. Marg. calls attention to the haste of the conspirators. They improvised a throne out of steps.

14—26. The Conspiracy of Jehu against Joram.

Jehu, as the following account shews, realised that a conspirator must strike quickly and unexpectedly.

15. *If this be your mind*] The Heb. expression cannot be literally rendered. LXX. *if your soul is truly with me.*

16. *rode in a chariot*] Better, **mounted his chariot**. Jehu took with him a 'company' (*v.* 17), consisting probably of other chariots and horsemen.

17. *on the tower in Jezreel*] Jezreel stands in a commanding position looking westward across the great plain of Jezreel to Carmel, and eastward down the valley of Jezreel, which slopes gently with a fall of 600 feet in twelve miles to Beth-shan, and thence to the Jordan a mile or two beyond. Jehu's company would be visible for many miles as it approached the city from the east after crossing the Jordan. Cp. G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, pp. 381—3.

a company] A better rendering perhaps would be *a goodly company*, for the Heb. word connotes *abundance*; in Isa. lx. 6 it is rendered *multitude*.

Is it peace?] The usual form of enquiry. Cp. iv. 26.

king, Is it peace? And Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh
19 not again. Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to them, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace?
20 turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for
21 he driveth furiously. And Joram said, [1]Make ready. And they made ready his chariot. And Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out to meet Jehu, and found him in the
22 portion of Naboth the Jezreelite. And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?
23 And Joram turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah,

[1] Or, *Yoke*

18. *What hast thou to do with peace?*] LXX. renders literally, 'What is to thee and to peace?' The same Heb. idiom is found in John ii. 4, *τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί;* Jehu refuses to answer the question.

turn thee behind me] The messenger on his fresh horse, if allowed to return, would arrive in Jezreel before the weary chariot horses, and his report that Jehu refused any information would shew that Jehu was in revolt.

20. *furiously*] Lit. *with madness.*

22. *when Joram saw Jehu*] Jehu, being fully determined on the death of Joram, allows the king to come quite near, in order that his escape may be impossible. The combination of headlong energy with cool deliberation which Jehu shewed on this occasion, was doubtless characteristic of the man. To it no doubt he owed his leading position in Joram's army.

What peace, so long as &c.] Rather, **What peace? Should it extend to the whoredoms of Jezebel thy mother, and her many witchcrafts?** The two sins, whoredom and witchcraft, are mentioned together as the characteristic sins of the inhabitants of a harem. Witchcraft was believed to be a real power, and so was used to further the aims of unlawful passions. It is probable that there is here a further reference to Jezebel's introduction of foreign worship, for Baal-worship was regarded as spiritual whoredom (Hos. ii. 13).

23. *turned his hands*] Joram was driving his own chariot. Cp. 1 K. xxii. 34.

There is treachery, O Ahaziah. And Jehu [1]drew his bow 24
with his full strength, and smote Joram between his arms,
and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in
his chariot. Then said *Jehu* to Bidkar his captain, Take up, 25
and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the
Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou rode
together after Ahab his father, the LORD [2]laid this burden
upon him; Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of 26
Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the LORD; and
I will requite thee in this [3]plat, saith the LORD. Now
therefore take and cast him into the plat *of ground*, according
to the word of the LORD. But when Ahaziah the king of 27
Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden house.
And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in
the chariot: *and they smote him* at the ascent of Gur, which

[1] Heb. *filled his hand with the bow*
[2] Or, *uttered this oracle against him* [3] Or, *portion*

24. *drew his bow with his full strength*] No faltering in any of Jehu's actions.

25. *his captain*] Cp. vii. 2, note.

rode together] The Heb. word suggests a procession of chariots or horsemen going two and two.

laid this burden upon him] The medium was Elijah (1 K. xxi. 17), though he is not mentioned here.

26. *yesterday*] From this word it appears that Naboth was slain on one day, and that Ahab went to seize the vineyard (and to hear his own doom) the next day. This note of time is not given in 1 K. xxi.

and the blood of his sons] Cp. 1 K. xxi. 14, note.

plat] *Plat*, which is found here only in the Bible, though it is used by Herrick, is identical with the German *platt* 'flat'; so that properly it signifies a piece of level ground.

27—29 (cp. 2 Chr. xxii. 7—9). THE FATE OF AHAZIAH.

27. *by the way of the garden house*] The Heb. for *the garden house* is *Beth-haggan*, which might perhaps be shortened to *Beth-gan*, LXX. Βαιθάν. It is probably to be identified with *En-gannim* ('the spring of the gardens') a town of Issachar which is mentioned in connexion with Jezreel in Josh. xix. 21. Its modern representative would be *Jenin*, a large village to the south of Jezreel. Ahaziah would naturally flee southward.

and said, Smite him also in the chariot: and they smote him *at the ascent of Gur*] The text is doubtful, for it is most unnatural that the verb should be inserted in an exclamatory speech, and omitted in the

is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there.
28 And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.
29 And in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.
30 And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her eyes, and tired her head, and
31 looked out at the window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, [1]Is it peace, thou Zimri, thy master's

[1] Or, *Is it well*

regular course of the narrative. LXX. on the other hand represents a reading which has the vigour of an original text: *and said, Him also! And he* (or *one*) *smote him by the chariot at the ascent of Gai.* The Heb. expression for *And he smote him* might easily have been corrupted into *Smite him.*

at the ascent of Gur] Of this locality nothing is known. LXX. has *Gai* for *Gur.*

Ibleam] Cp. Josh. xvii. 11. Identified with a site called *Bel'ameh*, a little south of *En-gannim.*

Megiddo] Cp. 1 K. iv. 12, note. Apparently Ahaziah's retreat was cut off, and he was driven westward.

and died there] According to Chron., 'they caught him (now he was hiding in Samaria) and they brought him to Jehu, and slew him.' But the account in Kings is more precise as a whole, and is more probably correct.

28. *and buried him in his sepulchre*] Joram on the contrary was cast out unburied (*v.* 25). Cp. 1 K. xiii. 22; xiv. 13.

29. *in the eleventh year*] According to viii. 25 it was the *twelfth* year.

30—37. The fate of Jezebel.

30. *painted her eyes*] LXX. ἐστιμίσατο (ἐστιβίσατο). She painted her eyebrows and eyelids with kohl, στίβι or στίμμι, a compound of antimony used by women in the East then and now to add to the beauty of their eyes. Jezebel's intention is, like Cleopatra's, to 'die a queen.'

> 'Now, Charmian,
> Shew me, my women, like a queen: go fetch
> My best attires.'
>
> *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act v. Scene ii.

tired] i.e. attired.

31. *Is it peace...?*] Better as marg., **Is it well...?** The words are intended as a reproach. Cp. *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act v. Scene ii.

> 'What work is here! Charmian, is this well done?'

murderer? And he lifted up his face to the window, and 32
said, Who is on my side? who? And there looked out
to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her 33
down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood
was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode
her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and 34
drink; and he said, See now to this cursed woman, and
bury her: for she is a king's daughter. And they went to 35
bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull,
and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they 36
came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word
of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the
Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall the dogs eat
the flesh of Jezebel: and the carcase of Jezebel shall be as 37
dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel;
so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel.

32. *looked out*] Rather, **looked down**. The window of the women's apartment would be far above the level of the street.

34. *cursed*] i.e. lying under the curse quoted in *v.* 36.

36. *by his servant Elijah*] Cp. 1 K. xxi. 23.

In the portion of Jezreel] See note on *v.* 10.

CH. X. 1—28. THE RUTHLESSNESS OF JEHU.

The terrible story of treachery and massacre told here belongs, it must be remembered, to Eastern history. Such outbreaks are characteristic of Eastern monarchies. We are shewn here that there is a providence even over such terrible events as these. Two facts stand out; the house of Ahab was punished for its deeds of blood, and the worship of Baal was extinguished. But Jehu himself, the Avenger of blood and the Reformer of religion, stands condemned by the mere record of what he did. It is worthy of note that the prophet Elisha, though he prompted Jehu's first step, seems to stand aloof from the dynasty of Jehu until the third generation (Joash). The Syrian ravages which lasted through the reigns of Jehu, Jehoahaz, and part of that of Joash seem a fit punishment for the new dynasty, whose founder had massacred the royal house which had fought so stoutly against the Syrians.

The praise awarded to Jehu in *v.* 30 is balanced by the announcement of judgement on him and on his house for the blood of Jezreel in Hos. i. 4. The conspirator indeed appears in a double aspect; on the one hand he was an instrument of punishment for the house of Ahab, on the other he earned punishment for himself by the ruthless cruelty with which he carried out his work. The Heb. historian is, however, too naive to explain this; he leaves the events in the main to explain themselves.

10 Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu
wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel,
even the elders, and unto them that brought up *the sons of*
2 Ahab, saying, And now as soon as this letter cometh to you,
seeing your master's sons are with you, and there are with
you chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour;
3 look ye out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and
set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's
4 house. But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold,
the two kings stood not before him: how then shall we
5 stand? And he that was over the household, and he that
was over the city, the elders also, and they that brought up
the children, sent to Jehu, saying, We are thy servants, and
will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any
6 man king: do thou that which is good in thine eyes. Then
he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye be
on my side, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye
the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me
to Jezreel by to-morrow this time. Now the king's sons,
being seventy persons, were with the great men of the city,
7 which brought them up. And it came to pass, when the
letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and
slew them, even seventy persons, and put their heads in

Ch. X. 1—11. The extermination of the house of Ahab

1. *letters*] The Hebrew word may mean one letter as in 1 K. xxi. 8 (marg. *a letter*).

unto the rulers of Jezreel] LXX. *rulers of Samaria*; Vulg. Pesh. (true text) *rulers* (only). Yet the Heb. text may be right, for the 'rulers of Jezreel' may have fled to Samaria.

2. *a fenced city*] Or, *fenced cities*. The Heb. singular may be taken as a collective. So LXX. Targ. Pesh. Vulg. As long as the capital held out for the house of Ahab, some other fortresses, e.g. Megiddo (*v.* 27), would probably do the same.

3. *and fight*] The message is a challenge.

5. *he that was over the household*] Cp. 1 K. iv. 6, note.

he that was over the city] This official is mentioned in 1 K. xxii. 26.

6. *take ye the heads*] Or, *bring ye the persons*. The command might be understood in the milder sense; Jehu deliberately gives an ambiguous order, knowing that it will be taken in the severer sense.

by to-morrow this time] Jehu allows no time for hesitation to arise.

baskets, and sent them unto him to Jezreel. And there 8
came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought
the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in
two heaps at the entering in of the gate until the morning.
And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and 9
stood, and said to all the people, Ye be righteous: behold,
I conspired against my master, and slew him: but who
smote all these? Know now that there shall fall unto the 10
earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD
spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the LORD hath
done that which he spake by his servant Elijah. So Jehu 11
smote all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel,
and all his great men, and his familiar friends, and his
priests, until he left him none remaining. And he arose 12
and departed, and went to Samaria. And as he was at the
[1]shearing house of the shepherds in the way, Jehu met with 13
the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who are
ye? And they answered, We are the brethren of Ahaziah:
and we go down to salute the children of the king and the

[1] Or, *house of gathering*

9. *and stood*] This expression taken together with the command to leave the heaps of heads *until the morning* (*v.* 8) shews that Jehu's action was deliberate. He wished the news of the massacre to spread so that there might be a great concourse of the people the next morning, and then he took up a conspicuous position and formally defended his own conduct.

Ye be righteous] Jehu calls on the people to judge righteously between him and his supposed accusers. Ahab, he says, was slain by one hand, his sons by another, but in each case the human hand was only an instrument of Divine vengeance (*v.* 10).

10. *by his servant Elijah*] Cp. 1 K. xxi. 21, 22.

11. *his priests*] Cp. 1 K. iv. 5, note.

12—14. THE SLAUGHTER OF THE KINSMEN OF AHAZIAH.

12. *and departed*] Read, **and came in.** Probably some words are missing at this point.

the shearing house] LXX. takes this as the proper name of some place (not yet identified) between Jezreel and Samaria.

13. *to salute*] Rather, **to ask after the welfare of.** The phrase suggests that these Judaeans had heard only vague rumours of the fate of Joram and Jezebel. Knowing that their own king was with Joram,

14 children of the queen. And he said, Take them alive. And they took them alive, and slew them at the [1]pit of the [2]shearing house, even two and forty men; neither left he any of them.

15 And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand;

16 and he took him up to him into the chariot. And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD. So they

17 made him ride in his chariot. And when he came to Samaria, he smote all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, according to the word of the

18 LORD, which he spake to Elijah. And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served Baal

[1] Or, *cistern* [2] Or, *house of gathering*

they were pressing on to Jezreel to learn the truth, when they were surprised and massacred by Jehu. The incident illustrates the ready ruthlessness of the usurper.

the children of the king] i.e. the king and his household, with special reference to the king himself.

the queen] Heb. *gĕbīrāh*. The queen-mother, Jezebel, is meant. Cp. 1 K. xv 13, note.

14. *Take them alive*] These orders were perhaps given in private; Jehu's object was that not one of them should take alarm and escape.

at the pit] Probably they were buried in this pit.

15—28. THE MASSACRE OF THE WORSHIPPERS OF BAAL.

15. *Jehonadab the son of Rechab*] From Jer. xxxv. it appears that this Jehonadab (Jonadab) commanded his clan, the Rechabites, to possess no land, to cultivate no vineyard, and to drink no wine. They were to be shepherds, like the earliest Israelites (Gen. xlvi. 31—34), not agriculturists like the Canaanites. In accordance with this manner of life they were out of sympathy with the Baal-religion, which was a kind of Nature-worship suited to tillers of the soil (cp. 1 K. xviii. 18, note on *Baalim*). Jehonadab was evidently a person of great importance.

he saluted him] Jehu saluted Jehonadab.

if it be] Jehu's words.

16. *see my zeal*] Rather, **look upon** (enjoy) **my zeal.** The Heb. construction is the same as in Ps. liv. 7.

a little; but Jehu shall serve him much. Now therefore 19
call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshippers,
and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great
sacrifice *to do* to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall
not live. But Jehu did it in subtilty, to the intent that
he might destroy the worshippers of Baal. And Jehu said, 20
Sanctify a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed it.
And Jehu sent through all Israel: and all the worshippers 21
of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came
not. And they came into the house of Baal; and the house
of Baal was filled from one end to another. And he said 22
unto him that was over the vestry, Bring forth vestments
for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth
vestments. And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of 23
Rechab, into the house of Baal; and he said unto the
worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here
with you none of the servants of the LORD, but the
worshippers of Baal only. And they went in to offer 24
sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had appointed

18. *Ahab served Baal a little*] Ahab no doubt 'went halting' (1 K. xviii. 21), trying to combine the worship of JEHOVAH with that of Baal. On the one hand he reared up an altar for Baal and made the Asherah (1 K. xvi. 32, 33) but on the other hand he named his sons Ahaziah and Jehoram, names which are compounded with the name of JEHOVAH. Jezebel was the real supporter of Baal-worship. Cp. 1 K. xviii. 19.

19. *all his worshippers*] These perhaps were few in number, for Joram (iii. 2) himself had taken active measures against Baal-worship.

20. *a solemn assembly*] Heb., *ăṣārāh*, as in Deut. xvi. 8; Joel i. 14.

21. *the house of Baal*] Most probably the worshippers were gathered in a courtyard surrounding the actual shrine.

from one end to another] LXX. renders literally, *mouth to mouth*; the worshippers were so crowded as to touch one another.

22. *the vestry*] Heb. *meltāḥāh*. The word occurs here only, and its meaning is doubtful. Perhaps it was usual for the congregation to wear special religious garments at the great festivals of Baal. Muslim pilgrims to Mecca put on a special dress called the *iḥrām* ('holy garment') on entering the sacred territory and put it off on quitting it. Everyday dress, if worn on such an occasion, would become *taboo* and useless for ordinary occasions.

23. *Search, and look*] The ostensible object of this search would be to exclude any who were not 'sanctified' (*v.* 20) from this solemn assembly. Cp. Exod. xix. 14, 15.

him fourscore men without, and said, If any of the men whom I bring into your hands escape, *he that letteth him go*, his life shall be for the life of him. And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the [1]guard and to the captains, Go in, and slay them; let none come forth. And they smote them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out, and went to the city of the house of Baal. And they brought forth the [2]pillars that were in the house of Baal, and burned them. And they brake down the pillar of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught house, unto this day. Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel. Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, [3]wherewith he made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, *to wit*, the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and that were in Dan. And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast [4]done well in

[1] Heb. *runners* [2] Or, *obelisks* [3] Or, *who* [4] Or, *executed well*

24. *fourscore men without*] These were to cut down the fugitives who escaped from the guard and the captains (*v.* 25) Jehu was thorough in all that he undertook.

25. *the guard*] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 27, note.

the captains] Cp. vii. 2, note.

the city of the house of Baal] *The house of Baal* was not in Samaria itself; the city referred to was one which had grown up round *the house*.

26. *the pillars*] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 23. The fate of the 'pillar of Baal' is given in the following verse; it is better therefore to read *Asherah* here. The *Asherah* being of wood (Deut. xvi. 21) might be consumed by burning; the 'pillar' on the contrary was of stone, and had to be 'broken down.'

27. *made it a draught house*] Cp. Ezra vi. 11; Dan. ii. 5.

29—31. JEHU CLEAVES TO THE CALF-WORSHIP.

29. *the sins of Jeroboam*] In this Jehu followed the example of Baasha (1 K. xv. 34) and of Omri (1 K. xvi. 26).

30. *And the LORD said*] Whether God spoke by a prophet, or through a vision, is not said.

The dynasty ended with Zechariah the fourth in descent from Jehu. Cp. xv. 8—12.

executing that which is right in mine eyes, *and* hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. But Jehu took no heed to walk in the 31
law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, wherewith he made Israel to sin.

In those days the LORD began to cut Israel short: and 32
Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; from Jordan 33
eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the valley of Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan. Now the 34
rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jehu slept with his fathers: 35
and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead. And the time that Jehu reigned over 36
Israel in Samaria was twenty and eight years.

Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her 11

32—36. ISRAEL REDUCED TO STRAITS BY SYRIA.

32. *to cut Israel short*] The Heb. phrase *lĕkaṣṣōth beyisrael*, is difficult, and the meaning is not quite certain. Vulg. *taedere super Israel*, 'to be weary of Israel.' Similarly Targ. *the anger of the LORD began to be strong against Israel.*

Hazael] Cp. viii. 7—15.

the coasts] Cp. 1 K. i. 3, note.

33. *the land of Gilead*] Cp. 1 K. iv. 13, with the notes.

34. *and all his might*] LXX. adds, 'and the treason that he wrought.' Cp. 1 K. xvi. 20.

CH. XI. 1—3 (=2 Chr. xxii. 10—12). ATHALIAH'S USURPATION.

1. *Athaliah*] Cp. viii. 18, 26. The king's mother (x. 13; xxiv. 15; 1 K. xv. 13) was nearly always a person of great influence in an Eastern court. In this case the death of the king at twenty-two or twenty-three years of age left an infant as the direct heir to the throne. Probably under these circumstances some more distant heir would have seized the crown, and Athaliah would have lost her position as 'queen.' Athaliah's massacre of the members of the royal house prevented this. As a daughter of Ahab she was perhaps also a daughter of Jezebel; in any case her vigour and unscrupulousness remind us of the Phœnician princess. Her task was the more easy since Jehu had destroyed forty-two of the 'brethren of Ahaziah' (x. 12—14).

son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal.
2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons that were slain, even him and his nurse, [1]*and put them* in the [2]bedchamber; and they hid him
3 from Athaliah, so that he was not slain. And he was with her hid in the house of the LORD six years: and Athaliah reigned over the land.
4 And in the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the captains over hundreds, of the [3]Carites and of the [4]guard, and brought them to him into the house of the LORD; and he made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the LORD, and shewed them the king's son.
5 And he commanded them, saying, This is the thing that ye shall do: a third part of you, that come in on the

[1] Or, who were
[2] Or, *chamber for the beds*
[3] Or, *executioners*
[4] Heb. *runners*

2. *Jehosheba*] In Chron. *Jehoshabeath*, another form of the name, just as *Elisabeth* (Luke i. 7) is another form of *Elisheba* (Exod. vi. 23). Indeed since the prefixes *Jeho-* and *Eli-* both represent the Divine Name, all four may be counted as different forms of one name. In Chron. Jehoshabeath is said to have been the wife of Jehoiada the priest.

and put them *in the bedchamber*] The verb is wanting in the Heb. and LXX., but is found in the parallel passage of Chron. But it is better to read with the Vulg., *de triclinio*, '[stole them]...*from* the bedchamber.'

4—16 (2 Chr. xxiii. 1—15). THE OVERTHROW OF ATHALIAH.

4. *the Carites*] These were probably foreigners retained in the royal service as guards. They are mentioned again only in *v.* 19 and in 2 Sam. xx. 23, where one reading of the Heb. (the Kĕthīb) is, *Over the Carites* (*Cherethites* according to the Ḳĕri) *and over the Pelethites. Carite* and *Cherethite* are probably different forms of the same name. Cp. 1 K. i. 38, note on *Cherethites and Pelethites.*

The Chronicler takes an entirely different view of the matter. He passes over the Carites and the guard, and assigns the part taken by them in the revolution to the Levites (2 Chr. xxiii. 2, 4, 7).

5. *This is the thing that ye shall do*] The royal guards appear to have been divided into three watches of eight hours each. When the watch came on duty at the palace at the beginning of the Sabbath, the other two watches who were off duty were to repair to the temple to act

sabbath, shall be keepers of the watch of the king's house; and a third part shall be at the gate Sur; and a third part 6
at the gate behind the guard: so shall ye keep the watch of the house, and be a barrier. And the two companies 7
of you, even all that go forth on the sabbath, shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD about the king. And 8
ye shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and he that cometh within the ranks, let him be slain: and be ye with the king when he goeth out, and when he cometh in. And the captains over 9
hundreds did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took every man his men, those that were to come in on the sabbath, with those that were to go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest.

as a guard to the young king. In the meantime the watch on guard at the palace was to be divided into three bodies, two of which were to guard two of the gates of the palace, which are specified. The third body was to be stationed perhaps in the guard room ready to answer any call. The intention of the order described in *v.* 6 is uncertain. If the places assigned by Jehoiada were the usual ones, the intention would be to avoid arousing the queen's suspicions. If, however, the places were specially chosen by the priest, the object would probably be to prevent the queen's escape. In any case *v.* 6 deals with details; the main arrangements are sketched in *vv.* 5 and 7, i.e. a third of the Guard at the Palace as usual, and two thirds at the Temple to carry out the revolution.

6. *the gate Sur*] Probably the same as the *gate of the foundation* (2 Chr. xxiii. 5), the difference between the two words in Heb. being very slight (סור and יסוד).

the gate behind the guard] i.e. as Pesh. *the gate of the guard house.* In *v.* 19 it seems to be called *the gate of the guard.* Nothing is known of the arrangements of the palace, so that the position of this gate and of the last mentioned can only be guessed.

and be a barrier] The meaning of the Heb. word is uncertain, and the text is probably faulty.

7. *that go forth*] i.e. who are released from duty.

8. *within the ranks*] i.e. of the guard. Chron. has 'into the house,' i.e. of the LORD.

9. *Jehoiada the priest*] In *v.* 4 he is called simply *Jehoiada*, but the expression used there, 'brought them to him into the house of the LORD' implies that he held the priestly office. Jehoiada, though he was no doubt the chief priest, is called simply *the priest*, in agreement with the general usage of the books of Samuel and Kings. Cp. xii. 7; xvi. 10, 11, 15, 16; 1 K. i. 8, 26; ii. 26, 27; 1 Sam. i. 9. The title *chief priest* occurs xxv. 18.

10 And the priest delivered to the captains over hundreds the spears and shields that had been king David's, which were
11 in the house of the LORD. And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, from the right [1]side of the house to the left side of the house, along by the altar and
12 the house, by the king round about. Then he brought out the king's son, and [2]put the crown upon him, and *gave him* the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, [3]God save the king.
13 And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard *and of* the people, she came to the people into the house of the
14 LORD: and she looked, and, behold, the king stood [4]by

[1] Heb. *shoulder* [2] Or, *put upon him the crown and the testimony*
[3] Heb. *Let the king live* [4] Or, *on the platform*

10. *the priest delivered*] The two watches of the guard who were off duty, had probably left their own weapons according to custom in the guard house. Cp. 1 K. xiv. 27, 28.

shields] Heb. *shĕlātīm*. This word is always used in the plural like the common word *kēlim*, 'weapons,' and it has probably, like *kēlīm*, a general sense. In Jer. li. 11 marg. it is rendered 'suits of armour.' Perhaps 'equipment' would be the best equivalent. Ancient authorities display great uncertainty. LXX. gives χλίδωνας, 'bracelets' (2 Sam. viii. 7), κλοιούς, 'collars' (1 Chr. xviii. 7), τρισσούς, 'tridents' (here), φαρέτρας, 'quivers' (Ezek. xxvii. 11), and ὅπλα, 'shields' or 'armour' (2 Chr. xxiii. 9). Vulg. *arma, pharetras, pelias.*

that had been king David's] They were perhaps the spoils of war. Cp. 2 Sam. viii. 10, 11.

12. *put the crown upon him, and* gave him *the testimony*] Better as marg., **put upon him the crown and the testimony.** The *testimony* was probably some document or charter specifying the ancient customs of the kingdom. Cp. Deut. xvii. 18; 1 Sam. x. 25. The king by wearing this document at his coronation consented to observe its contents. The wearing of an inscription or of a document on a solemn occasion is quite in accordance with Eastern ideas. Cp. Exod. xxviii. 29, 36 ff.; Deut. vi. 6—8; Job xxxi. 35, 36. General Chesney (*Narrative of the Euphrates Expedition*, London, 1868, p. 73) narrates that when he presented the Sultan's firman to a certain sheikh, the sheikh and his Arab guests *placed it on their heads* as an acknowledgement of duty and a token of respect. A similar incident is recorded (on p. 425 of the same work) of the great Reshid Pasha, governor of Asia Minor in 1835. The text agrees with 2 Chr. xxiii. 11. Wellhausen's emendation ('bracelets' for 'testimony') cannot be justified.

God save the king] For this salutation cp. 1 K. i. 25, note.

13. *into the house of the LORD*] The guard allowed her to come within their barrier.

the pillar, as the manner was, and the captains and the trumpets by the king; and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, treason. And Jehoiada the 15
priest commanded the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, Have her forth between the ranks; and him that followeth her slay with the sword: for the priest said, Let her not be slain in the house of the LORD. So they made way for her; and she went by the 16
way of the horses entry to the king's house: and there was she slain.

And Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD and 17
the king and the people, that they should be the LORD's people, between the king also and the people. And all 18
the people of the land went to the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed [1]officers over the house

[1] Heb. *offices*

14. *by the pillar*] Cp. xxiii. 3.

as the manner was] Joash stood in the place usually occupied by the king. Chron. *at the entrance*, a less probable reading.

15. *him that followeth her*] The priest feared mob violence within the temple.

16. *they made way for her*] A.V. *they laid hands upon her*, but this rendering, though supported by LXX. Vulg. is wrong.

17—21. THE COVENANT.

17. *made a covenant*] Heb. made the covenant, i.e. renewed the covenant.

18. *the people of the land*] Cp. *v.* 14; xv. 5; xvi. 15; xxi. 24; xxiii. 30. The phrase designates the people as distinguished from their rulers. In later Hebrew it is used contemptuously.

the house of Baal] The building of this house is not recorded in Kings, but it is said of Jehoram, the husband of Athaliah, that 'he walked in the way of the kings of Israel' (viii. 18), and of Ahaziah, the son of Athaliah, that 'he walked in the way of the house of Ahab' (viii. 27). From these two statements, read in their context, we cannot doubt that Baal worship was allowed in Judah under these two kings.

before the altars] This detail illustrates the headlong zeal of the people (for the time) against foreign worship.

appointed officers] It was necessary now to watch lest some injury

19 of the LORD. And he took the captains over hundreds, and the Carites, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the LORD, and came by the way of the gate of the guard unto the king's house. And he sat on the throne of the
20 kings. So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet: and they slew Athaliah with the sword at the king's house.

21 Jehoash was seven years old when he began to reign.
12 In the seventh year of Jehu began Jehoash to reign; and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name
2 was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. And Jehoash did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD all his days wherein
3 Jehoiada the priest instructed him. Howbeit the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

should be done to the Temple in revenge by the Baal-worshippers. For an interesting allusion to this action of Jehoiada see Jer. xxix. 26.

19. *the Carites*] Vulg. (here) *Cerethi et Phelethi*, i.e. 'the Cherethites and Pelethites.' Cp. *v.* 4, note.

the gate of the guard] In 2 Chr. xxiii. 20 it is called *the upper gate*, for which cp. xv. 35, note.

CH. XI. 21—XII. 3. JEHOASH BEGINS TO REIGN.

21. *Jehoash*] Another form of *Joash*; cp. *Jehoram* and *Joram*.

CH. XII.

1. *Zibiah*] The name of the king's mother is regularly given in the case of the kings of Judah. Cp. xiv. 2; xv. 2, 33; xviii. 2; xxi. 1; xxii. 1, 19; xxiii. 31, 36; xxiv. 8, 18. The mothers of kings were important persons. Cp. 1 K. xv. 13.

2. *all his days wherein Jehoiada...instructed him*] The Heb. text is better rendered, *all his days, because Jehoiada...taught him*, but this rendering cannot be reconciled with 2 Chr. xxiv. 17—22, which says that Joash allowed the practice of idolatry after Jehoiada's death. But the correct reading of the Hebrew may be *all the days that Jehoiada instructed him*, and if it be so, the discrepancy with Chron. is removed. The difference lies in one Heb. consonant.

3. *the high places were not taken away*] Cp. 1 K. iii. 2; xv. 14, note.

And Jehoash said to the priests, All the money of the 4
hallowed things that is brought into the house of the LORD,
[1]in current money, [2]the money of the persons for whom
each man is rated, and all the money that it cometh into
any man's heart to bring into the house of the LORD, let 5
the priests take it to them, every man from his acquaint-
ance: and they shall repair the breaches of the house,
wheresoever any breach shall be found. But it was so, that 6
in the three and twentieth year of king Jehoash the priests
had not repaired the breaches of the house. Then king 7

[1] Or, even *the money* of every one *that passeth* the numbering See Ex. xxx. 13 [2] Heb. *each man the money of the souls of his estimation* See Lev. xxvii. 2

4—16 (=2 Chr. xxiv. 4—14). THE HOUSE OF THE LORD REPAIRED.

4. *All the money*] Money might come to the Temple in three different ways: (1) as the price of something vowed and redeemed for a price in ready money, Lev. xxvii. 11, 12; (2) as poll-tax payable for every male Israelite, Exod. xxx. 11—16; (3) as a free-will offering. Jehoash here assigns to the priests the money obtained from all sources, on condition that they themselves repair the Temple.

the hallowed things] i.e. the things vowed as *Holy to the LORD*.

current money] The Heb. word *keseph*, 'money,' means properly 'silver,' and there is nothing to suggest that coined money is meant here. According to the evidence available at present the earliest attempts at coining money are to be attributed to Gyges king of Lydia[1], circ. 700 B.C. Before his time the precious metals were made up into ingots in order that they might serve as currency. The ingots were weighed when the money changed hands. Cp. 1 K. xx. 39, 'Thou shall pay (lit. thou shall weigh) a talent of silver.' The purity of the metal composing these ingots varied with the honesty of those who cast them. In the Tell-el-Amarna letters Burnaburyash complains that the king of Egypt had sent him 20 minas of gold which shrank to 5 minas when tested. See Hastings' *Dictionary*, article MONEY by A. R. S. Kennedy. Marg. gives an inferior rendering.

5. *every man from his acquaintance*] The Heb. word rendered *acquaintance* is found here only, and the sense is uncertain.

6. *in the three and twentieth year...the priests had not repaired*] How long this neglect had continued cannot be gathered from the present text, but probably some statement of time was given in the original text of *v.* 4, which would shew this. The Chronicler assigns the blame differently; the Levites would not make a collection in the cities of Judah.

[1] See Herodotus, I. 94.

Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest, and for the *other* priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore take no *more* money from your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house.
8 And the priests consented that they should take no *more* money from the people, neither repair the breaches of the
9 house. But Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the LORD: and the priests that kept the [1]door put therein all the money that
10 was brought into the house of the LORD. And it was so, when they saw that there was much money in the chest, that the king's [2]scribe and the high priest came up, and they [3]put up in bags and told the money that was found

[1] Heb. *threshold* [2] Or, *secretary* [3] Heb. *bound up and &c.*

8. *And the priests consented*] This record of the priests' consent is evidently intended as an important state memorandum. It is probable that the priests were in the habit of receiving 'the money of the hallowed things' *before* Jehoash assigned it to them. But the people, it seems, did not acquiesce in this practice, and there was a standing dispute on the subject. Jehoash made a settlement for a time by a compromise, that the priests should take the money, and also be responsible for the repair of the house. When, however, the priests failed in their duty, they were put at a moral disadvantage, and Jehoash took the opportunity of settling the question finally by deciding against the claim of the priests, and constraining them to agree to his decision.

9. *chest*] LXX. κιβωτόν. The word is used for the *ark* of the covenant, 1 K. viii. 4, *al.*

beside the altar] The position of the chest suggested that the money put in was of the nature of an offering.

the priests that kept the door] Cp. xi. 18 (note); xxv. 18; Ps. lxxxiv. 10 (with marg.).

10. *the king's scribe*] Cp. 1 K. iv. 3, note.

they put up in bags] Heb. *bound up* (without mention of bags). In ancient Egypt money existed in the form of rings of metal, which could be threaded on a cord, and so bound up. 'Bundles of money' are spoken of in Gen. xlii. 35; and there can be no doubt that ring-money was in use (but not in exclusive use) among the Hebrews. Of course bundles of money might be put into bags (v. 23).

told] Cp. Gen. xv. 5; Ps. xxii. 17.

in the house of the LORD. And they gave the money that 11
was weighed out into the hands of them that did the work,
that had the oversight of the house of the LORD: and they
[1]paid it out to the carpenters and the builders, that wrought
upon the house of the LORD, and to the masons and the 12
hewers of stone, and for buying timber and hewn stone to
repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all that
[2]was laid out for the house to repair it. But there were not 13
made for the house of the LORD cups of silver, snuffers,
basons, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver,
of the money that was brought into the house of the LORD:
for they gave that to them that did the work, and repaired 14
therewith the house of the LORD. Moreover they reckoned 15
not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the
money to give to them that did the work: for they dealt
faithfully. The money for the guilt-offerings, and the money 16
for the sin offerings, was not brought into the house of the
LORD: it was the priests'.

[1] Heb. *brought it forth* [2] Heb. *went forth*

11. *that did the work*] Not the handicraftsmen, as the succeeding words shew, but the superintendents of the work. The intention is to make it clear that the money did not go, as before, to the priests.

13. *there were not made*] In 2 Chr. xxiv. 14 it is said that vessels were made with the money left over after the building work was finished.

cups...snuffers, basons, trumpets] In a similar enumeration of the vessels in 1 K. vii. 50 *spoons* and *firepans* take the place of *trumpets*. The *cups* and *basons* were both used for receiving the blood of the sacrificial victim. Cp. Exod. xii. 22 (for *bason* read *cup*); and for *basons* (Heb. *mizrāḳōth*) see 1 K. vii. 45, note. For *trumpets* (Heb. *ḥăṣōṣrāh*) see Num. x. 1—10, especially *v.* 10, 'In your set feasts, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings.'

15. *to give to them that did the work*] This clause is tautological and is probably a gloss. The men *that did the work* are to be identified (*v.* 11) with the men *that had the oversight*.

16. *the guilt offerings*] Heb. *āshām*. Lev. v. 15—19.
the sin offerings] Heb. *ḥattā'ōth*. Lev. iv. 22—35.
it was the priests'] Lev. vii. 7.

17—21 (2 Chr. xxiv. 23—27). THE END OF THE REIGN OF JEHOASH.

The Chronicler gives here a narrative, which is absent from Kings, to the effect that after the death of Jehoiada, Jehoash was persuaded by

17 Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against
Gath, and took it: and Hazael set his face to go up to
18 Jerusalem. And Jehoash king of Judah took all the hallowed
things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his
fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed
things, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of
the house of the LORD, and of the king's house, and sent
it to Hazael king of Syria: and he went away from Jeru-
19 salem. Now the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he
did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of
20 the kings of Judah? And his servants arose, and made
a conspiracy, and smote Joash at the house of Millo, *on*
21 *the way* that goeth down to Silla. For Jozacar the son of
Shimeath, and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants,
smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his
fathers in the city of David: and Amaziah his son reigned
in his stead.

13 In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of

the princes of Judah to sanction idolatrous worship. When Zechariah the son of Jehoiada stood up as a prophet, the narrative continues, and rebuked the idolaters, he was stoned at the bidding of the king.

17. *Hazael*] Cp. xiii. 3, and vi. 24, note.

Gath] Cp. 1 K. ii. 39, note. Hazael began his wars against Israel by smiting the whole land east of Jordan in the days of Jehu (xii. 32, 33). He continued his wars against Israel under Jehu's son Jehoahaz, probably making the land west of Jordan suffer. In the expedition here mentioned he must have crossed Israel from East to West before descending upon Gath.

18. *took all the hallowed things*] The Temple treasures were taken or extorted on several occasions: xvi. 8 (sent to Assyria by Ahaz); xviii. 15, 16 (surrendered to the king of Assyria by Hezekiah); xxiv.13 (seized by Nebuchadnezzar); 1 K. xiv. 26 (seized by Shishak).

20. *at the house of Millo*] Probably the place called *Millo* in 1 K. ix. 15 (see note there). The Chronicler perhaps misread this word for *mittah*, 'bed,' for he says that the conspirators slew Jehoash 'upon his bed.' The words which follow ('on the way *that goeth down to Silla*') are probably corrupt.

CH. XIII. 1—9. THE REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ OVER ISRAEL.

1. *in the three and twentieth year*] Joash's predecessor, Athaliah, reigned six years (xi. 3, 4), so that according to the usual Hebrew (inclusive) reckoning Jehu must have reigned 29 years. Only 28 however are assigned him in x. 36.

Ahaziah, king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began
to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* seventeen years.
And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, 2
and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, where-
with he made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.
And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and 3
he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria,
and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, [1]con-
tinually. And Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD 4
hearkened unto him: for he saw the oppression of Israel,
how that the king of Syria oppressed them. (And the LORD 5
gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under the
hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in
their tents, as beforetime. Nevertheless they departed not 6

[1] Heb. *all the days*

2. *the sins*] Jeroboam's 'sins' were (1) the calf-worship; (2) the irregular priesthood; (3) the irregular annual feast; 1 K. xii. 28—33. But the three might be spoken of as one (1 K. xv. 34).

3. *the anger of the LORD was kindled*] The sin referred to existed already in the reign of Jehu, and the punishment also began in that reign. Cp. x. 31—33.

continually] Cp. *v.* 22, *all the days of Jehoahaz*, which is perhaps too general a statement to be taken literally. The sense is probably, *year after year*. Cp. Jud. vi. 1, 3, 4.

4. *And Jehoahaz besought the LORD*] For the form of expression cp. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12. In *vv.* 4—7 the author of Kings has plainly given an abbreviated text of the document which lay before him, and the connexion has been thereby obscured. But E.V. is clearly wrong in placing the mark of a parenthesis before *v.* 5. *V.* 5 is the continuation of *v.* 4; Jehoahaz made supplication, *and* the LORD heard him, *and* the LORD gave Israel a saviour. This saviour is not named. He is not to be identified in this passage with Joash the son and successor of Jehoahaz (*vv.* 22—25), and still less with Jeroboam his grandson (xiv. 25—27), for the 'salvation' evidently took place under Jehoahaz. Further, the context (*vv.* 6, 7) suggests that the relief was only temporary. Such a temporary deliverance in the reign of Jehoahaz himself was probably effected by the expedition of Adad-nirari III. of Assyria against Damascus about the year 803 B.C., when the Assyrian king received tribute from several Syrian states and blockaded Damascus (Schrader, *K.A.T.*, ed. 3, page 260).

5. *dwelt in their tents*] A metaphorical expression denoting a state of peace. The Israelites were able to live at home; they were no longer forced into hiding places (Jud. vi. 2; 1 Sam. xiii. 6).

6. *Nevertheless they departed not*] This verse is rightly taken as parenthetic; Israel, though saved, did not return to JEHOVAH.

from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, wherewith he made Israel to sin, but [1]walked therein: and there remained the
7 Asherah also in Samaria.) For he left not to Jehoahaz of the people save fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria destroyed them,
8 and made them like the dust [2]in threshing. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the
9 kings of Israel? And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.

10 In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in
11 Samaria, *and reigned* sixteen years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he
12 made Israel to sin: but he walked therein. Now the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are

[1] Heb. *he walked* [2] Or, *to trample on*

but walked therein] Heb. *he* (Jehoahaz) *walked.* The statement is usually made of a king, not of the people.

there remained the Asherah] Possibly the Asherah set up by Ahab (1 K. xvi. 33), for it is not said that Jehu destroyed it when he rooted the worship of Baal out of Israel; but cp. x. 26, note on *the pillars.* For *Asherah* see 1 K. xiv. 23, note.

7. *For he left not*] The *For* takes up the thread of *vv.* 3, 4.

8. *Now the rest &c.*] This verse repeats the formula used of Jehu in x. 34; it is official language, and so it is not necessary to discuss the question whether the expression, *his might*, is strictly applicable to Jehoahaz.

10—13. SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF JEHOASH OVER ISRAEL.

The reign of Jehoash is narrated in two extracts, the first, with purely formal details, from the state chronicles (*vv.* 10—13), the second, in which the king is associated with Elisha the prophet, from (it would seem) some biography of Elisha (*vv.* 14—25).

10. *In the thirty and seventh year*] If Jehoahaz began to reign in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah and reigned seventeen years (cp. *v.* 1), Jehoash of Israel cannot have begun to reign before the thirty-ninth or fortieth year of Jehoash of Judah. *Thirty-ninth* would also agree better with the statement of xiv. 1.

they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Joash slept with his fathers; and Jeroboam 13
sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he 14
died: and Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over [1]him, and said, My father, my father, the [2]chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof! And Elisha 15
said unto him, Take bow and arrows: and he took unto him bow and arrows. And he said to the king of Israel, 16
Put thine hand upon the bow: and he put his hand *upon it*. And Elisha laid his hands upon the king's hands. And he 17
said, Open the window eastward: and he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot: and he shot. And he said, The LORD's arrow of [3]victory, even the arrow of [3]victory [4]over Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them. And he said, Take the arrows: and he took them. 18
And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground: and he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was 19

[1] Heb. *his face* [2] Or, *chariot* [3] Heb. *salvation* [4] Or, *against*

14—19. THE DEATHBED OF ELISHA.

14. *My father*] Cp. ii. 12, note.

the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!] The king salutes the prophet as the great defence of Israel against the Syrians. Cp. vi. 8—vii. 16.

15. *bow and arrows*] The bow was the national weapon (Hos. i. 5).

17. *Open the window*] i.e. remove the shutter or lattice work.

Then Elisha said, Shoot: and he shot] This clause is not found in LXX. (B); it is perhaps an interpolation.

The LORD's arrow of victory] Lit. *An arrow of deliverance for the LORD!* The form of the phrase is the same as in Jud. vii. 20, 'A sword for the LORD!' It is short for, *Shoot now an arrow of deliverance &c.*

in Aphek] See 1 K. xx. 26, note. *Aphek* seems to be the name of a district as well as of a town.

till thou have consumed them] In *v.* 19 the prophet seems to take this promise back. Prophetic promises are conditional.

19. *the man of God was wroth*] Elisha reads the king's character in the king's actions; he misses in it the signs of a whole hearted obedience to the God of Israel.

wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

20 And Elisha died, and they buried him. Now the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the
21 year. And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and [1]as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

22 And Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days
23 of Jehoahaz. But the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his

[1] Heb. *when the man went and touched*

20, 21. THE REVIVAL OF A DEAD MAN THROUGH THE BONES OF ELISHA.

20. *they buried him*] The place of his burial is not stated, though this particular is usually given in cases in which the fact of burial is mentioned. The narrative has perhaps been shortened.

the bands of the Moabites] Cp. xxiv. 2. Marauding bands (Heb. *gĕdūd*, cp. Gen. xlix. 19, R.V. marg.) acting perhaps nominally in the interest of the Syrians, who were at war with Israel. LXX. *μονόζωνοι Μωάβ*, 'marauders of Moab.'

invaded] Better, **used to invade.**

at the coming in of the year] The Heb. phrase is ungrammatical, and the text is perhaps corrupted, but the general sense given in the R.V. agrees with the LXX. and is probably correct.

21. *as soon as the man touched*] A correct paraphrase. See Ecclus xlviii. 13, 14.

22—25. THE SYRIANS CHECKED.

22. *all the days of Jehoahaz*] i.e all the days that Hazael and Jehoahaz were contemporary. Some relief came after Hazael's death. Cp. *vv.* 3—5 with the notes.

23. *had respect unto them*] Lit. *looked upon them*, LXX. *ἐπέβλεψεν ἐπ' αὐτούς*. Cp. 2 Sam. ix. 8; Luke ix. 38.

with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob] Cp. Exod. xxxii. 13.

presence [1]as yet. And Hazael king of Syria died; and 24
Ben-hadad his son reigned in his stead. And Jehoash the 25
son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad
the son of Hazael the cities which he had taken out of the
hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times did Joash
smite him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

In the second year of Joash son of Joahaz king of Israel 14
began Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah to reign.
He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; 2
and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem: and his
mother's name was Jehoaddin of Jerusalem. And he did 3
that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, yet not like
David his father: he did according to all that Joash his
father had done. Howbeit the high places were not taken 4
away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the
high places. And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom 5

[1] Heb. *until now*

cast...from his presence] Cp. xvii. 20; xxiv. 20; Jer. vii. 15. The style of the compiler, whose words we have here, resembles that of Deuteronomy and Jeremiah.

as yet] See xvii. 18, 20, 23.

24. *Ben-hadad*] He was probably contemporary with Jehoahaz for a year or two. Cp. *v.* 3; vi. 24, note.

25. *the cities*] Cp. x. 32, 33.

Three times] Cp. *v.* 19.

did Joash smite him] Syria was no doubt weakened at this time by the pressure of the Assyrians from the East. Cp. *vv.* 4, 5, note.

CH. XIV. 1—7 (=2 Chr. xxv. 1—13). THE REIGN OF AMAZIAH OVER JUDAH.

1. *In the second year*] Cp. xiii. 10, note.

2. *Jehoaddin*] So the *Kĕthīb*. A.V. following the *Kĕrī* has *Jehoaddan* in agreement with 2 Chr. xxv. 1.

of Jerusalem] For this somewhat strange designation cp. xv. 2. We should rather expect the mention of her father's name as in xv. 33; xviii. 2.

3. *not like David*] Contrast xviii. 3 (spoken of Hezekiah).

Joash] Cp. xii. 2, 3.

4. *Howbeit &c.*] This verse agrees word for word with xii. 3.

was established in his hand, that he slew his servants which
6 had slain the king his father: but the children of the murderers he put not to death: according to that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, as the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the
7 fathers; but every man shall die for his own sin. He slew of Edom in the Valley of Salt ten thousand, and took [1]Sela by war, and called the name of it Joktheel, unto this day.

[1] Or, *the rock*

5. *his servants*] He retained his father's murderers in their offices allowing them to serve under himself, until he was strong enough to put them to death.

6. *the children of the murderers*] Children were not unfrequently put to death with their fathers. Cp. 1 K. xxi. 14, note.

in the book] Cp. 1 K. ii. 3.

The fathers shall not &c.] Deut. xxiv. 16.

7. *the Valley of Salt*] 2 Sam. viii. 13; Ps. lx. (Heading). Here David won a victory over Edom. The 'valley' is probably to be identified with the marshy flat at the south end of the Dead Sea. This flat is dominated by the *Jebel Usdum* a hill consisting 'almost entirely of pure crystallised salt' (Baedeker, *Palestine*, p. 143).

Sela] Isa. xvi. 1. *Sela* means 'rock,' and so corresponds with *Petra*, hence LXX. gives *τὴν πέτραν*, but it is not certain that the well-known *Petra* (situated 50 miles south of the Valley of Salt) is meant here. Certainly the town known as *Joktheel* to the writer of Josh. xv. 38 was in the south-west of Judah near Lachish, and so far away from Petra.

8—16 (= 2 Chr. xxv. 17—24). THE TRIUMPH OF JEHOASH OF ISRAEL OVER AMAZIAH.

This passage, as *vv.* 15, 16 shew, has been extracted from the chronicles of the kings of Israel. The defiant message of Amaziah is introduced here with extreme abruptness. No hint is given of the events which led to the challenge. But the book of Chronicles indicates the cause of the quarrel (2 Chr. xxv. 6—10, 13). Amaziah doubting his own power to overcome Edom hired an Ephraimite (Israelite) army of auxiliaries. Afterwards on the remonstrance of a prophet he dismissed this force, and went to the war without it. Thereupon the mercenaries, disappointed of Edomite plunder, consoled themselves with the spoil of several Judaean cities, and when once the spirit of rapine had broken out, did not spare some of their own towns. Cp. 2 Chr. xxv. 13, 'from Samaria even unto Beth-horon.' Both kingdoms suffered, but the exact share of blame was difficult to allot. Here was matter for a bitter quarrel.

Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of 8
Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us
look one another in the face. And Jehoash the king of 9
Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The [1]thistle
that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon,
saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there
passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode
down the thistle. Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and 10
thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory thereof, and abide at
home; for why shouldest thou [2]meddle to *thy* hurt, that
thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee? But 11
Amaziah would not hear. So Jehoash king of Israel went
up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another
in the face at Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah.
And Judah was put to the worse before Israel; and they 12
fled every man to his tent. And Jehoash king of Israel 13
took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the
son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem,

[1] Or, *thorn* [2] Or, *provoke calamity*

8. *let us look one another in the face*] The meaning of this phrase is not certain. It is usually understood as a challenge to fight, but it may be no more than a claim to be admitted as an equal to a conference on the matter in dispute. Jehoash whose kingdom was three times as large as that of Amaziah treats the message with disdain. He probably looked upon Judah as an appendage of the kingdom of Israel.

10. *glory thereof*] Vulg. *contentus esto gloria* (a good paraphrase).
meddle to thy *hurt*] Better as marg., **provoke calamity**.

11. *Beth-shemesh*] This was one of the cities which marked the course of the western boundary of the territory of the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv. 10). Its site is probably marked by the modern *Ain Shems*, which is situated about 15 miles due west of Jerusalem, just where the wādi es-Surar opens out into a basin to receive two tributary wādis. It is a well watered spot suited for the meeting place of two armies. The wādi es-Surar would give comparatively easy access for Jehoash's army to Jerusalem after the victory. An advance on Jerusalem directly from the north offers many serious difficulties to an army. On the site cp. G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, pages 218 f.

12. *to his tent*] Another reading of the Heb. is *to his tents*. Cp. 2 Sam. xviii. 17. A rich man would own several tents; his chief wife would have one to herself (Gen. xxiv. 67). The expression *tent* or *tents* is of course to be understood metaphorically as meaning *home*. Cp. xiii. 5, note.

and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of
14 Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits. And
he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were
found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of
the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.
15 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his
might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are
they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings
16 of Israel? And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was
buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and Jeroboam
his son reigned in his stead.

17 And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived
after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel
18 fifteen years. Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they
not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings
19 of Judah? And they made a conspiracy against him
in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish: but they sent after
20 him to Lachish, and slew him there. And they brought
him upon horses: and he was buried at Jerusalem with his
21 fathers in the city of David. And all the people of Judah

13. *the gate of Ephraim*] Mentioned Neh. viii. 16; xii. 39. Its site is unknown, but it was probably on the north or north-west of the city. Cp. C. R. Conder in Hastings' *Dictionary*, II. 593 *a*.

the corner gate] Mentioned 2 Chr. xxvi. 9; Jer. xxxi. 38; Zech. xiv. 10. It is supposed to have stood on the west of the city.

17—20 (=2 Chr. xxv. 25—28). THE END OF AMAZIAH.

19. *they made a conspiracy*] As against Athaliah (xi. 4 ff.), and against Joash (xii. 20 f.).

Lachish] See xviii. 17; xix. 8; Josh. x. 3. The site is probably to be identified with the mound called *Tell-el-Hesy* about 35 miles south-west of Jerusalem. In this mound traces of a city, or rather of a succession of cities, have been found, the earliest dating apparently from circ. 1700 B.C. Remains of very thick walls were discovered at the explorations of Flinders Petrie and F. J. Bliss. See Bliss, *A Mound of many cities*.

20. *buried at Jerusalem*] Cp. xii. 21. The assassinated kings were buried with respect.

21, 22 (2 Chr. xxvi. 1, 2). AZARIAH (UZZIAH) SUCCEEDS.

The account of the reign of Azariah is given in xv. 1—7.

21. *all the people of Judah*] The popular feeling was perhaps against the assassins.

took [1]Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah. He built Elath, 22
and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king 23
of Judah Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, *and reigned* forty and one years. And 24
he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin. He restored the 25
border of Israel from the entering in of Hamath unto the sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher. For the LORD saw the affliction of Israel, that it 26

[1] In ch. xv. 13, and 2 Chr. xxvi. 1, *Uzziah*

22. *He built*] This word often implies *rebuilding* and *fortifying* (1 K. xii. 25). It is probably the case here.

Elath] Also called *Eloth*. Cp. 1 K. ix. 26, note.

after that the king slept with his fathers] The king here referred to is probably the king of Israel, Jeroboam the son of Joash. This method of dating is only an extension of the system by which the accession of a king of Judah is regularly dated by the regnal year of a king of Israel. Jeroboam's name has fallen out of the text through scribal error. Cp. *v.* 28, note.

23—29 (no parallel in Chron.). THE REIGN OF JEROBOAM THE SON OF JOASH OVER ISRAEL.

25. *He restored*] Rather, **He it was who restored.**

the entering in of Hamath] Cp. 1 K. viii. 65, note.

the sea of the Arabah] Cp. Deut. iii. 17, where the course of the river Jordan is described as 'from Chinnereth (i.e. the lake of Galilee) even unto the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea' (i.e. the Dead Sea). Cp. also Josh. iii. 16. For *Arabah* cp. xxv. 4, note.

Jonah] This Jonah must have prophesied against Damascus and against the Syrians, who were then the enemies of Israel. The book of Jonah on the other hand gives the account of a prophecy against Nineveh and the Assyrians, who became the enemies of Israel after Jeroboam's death.

Gath-hepher] Not mentioned in the book of Jonah. According to Josh. xix. 13 it was in Zebulun. It has been identified with the modern el-Meshhed about a mile and a half south-west of Kefr Kenna (Cana of Galilee).

26. *the affliction*] Or, *the low estate*, LXX. ταπείνωσιν, as in Luke i. 48.

was very bitter: for there was none shut up nor left at large,
27 neither was there any helper for Israel. And the LORD said
not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under
heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the
28 son of Joash. Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and
all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how
he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, *which had belonged*
to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of the

there was none shut up nor left at large] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 10, note. The Hebrew phrase (*shut up and left at large*) appears in the book of the Revelation in slightly varying forms: vi. 15, 'every bondman and freeman'; xiii. 16, 'the free and the bond'; xix. 18, 'all men both free and bond.'

27. *by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash*] The words acknowledge as a principle that God sometimes works out His will through the instrumentality of evil men. Jeroboam was a patron of the calf-worship (*v.* 24), and he brought himself under the denunciations of the prophet Amos (Amos vii. 9 ff.), yet the historian does not shrink from describing him in reference to the Syrian oppression as a God-sent saviour. Cp. the narrative of Ahab's victory (or two victories) in 1 K. xx.

28. *how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus, and Hamath*, which had belonged *to Judah, for Israel*] These words seem to be parallel with *v.* 25, but they raise certain difficulties of their own. In the first place the historical evidence is against the statement that Jeroboam 'recovered Damascus.' It seems rather to be the case that the Syrians held their capital until it fell into the hands of the Assyrians under Tiglath-pileser III. in 733,2 B.C. Cp. xvi. 9. The statement that Jeroboam 'recovered Hamath' is equally against our available evidence. There is nothing to shew that Israel ever held Hamath, and *v.* 25 expressly says that it was 'the entering in' of Hamath, which Jeroboam restored. Further, the description given of Hamath in the words *which had belonged to Judah* are in any case unsuitable. Hamath had once paid a 'present' (2 Sam. viii. 9, 10) to David, but the kingdom of Israel was undivided then. Lastly, the translation *for Israel* is impossible; the phrase means *in* or *by Israel*.

In the face of these difficulties an emendation of the text commends itself as probable. A simple transposition and a dropping of a copula (*and*) gives the text: *how he warred with Damascus and restored Hamath to Judah by Israel. Hamath* may be a corrupt reading brought in from *v.* 25 in place of the name of *Elath* on the Red Sea. The expression *by Israel* for *by means of Israel* is unusual, and may also be due to a corruption of the text.

We thus obtain two accounts of the restoration of Elath to Judah; according to *v.* 22, Azariah of Judah restored it after the death of Jeroboam (see note on *v.* 22); according to *v.* 28, the restorer was Jeroboam himself. Probably the two accounts are complementary, not contra-

chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jeroboam slept with 29
his fathers, even with the kings of Israel; and Zechariah
his son reigned in his stead.

In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of 15
Israel began [1]Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to
reign. Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign; 2
and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem: and his
mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. And he did that 3
which was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all

[1] In verses 13, 30, &c., *Uzziah*

dictory. The successes of Jeroboam forced the Syrians to relax their hold on Elath, but Azariah did not secure it for Judah by fortifying it, until after the death of the king of Israel.

CH. XV. 1—7 (= 2 Chr. xxvi. 3—23). THE REIGN OF AZARIAH (UZZIAH).

1. *In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam*] Amaziah (xiv. 17) died in the *fifteenth* (or by inclusive reckoning *sixteenth*) year of Jeroboam, and it was to be expected that Azariah would succeed his father in the same year. Instead of this, however, some eleven years remain unassigned to any king of Judah. Further, if we accept the statement that Azariah succeeded his father in the *twenty-seventh* year of Jeroboam, and combine it with the reckoning that Jeroboam reigned not more than forty-one years (xiv. 23), we cannot assign to Azariah from his *fifteenth* year until his *thirty-eighth* (*v.* 8 *infra*) any contemporary as king over Israel. Some twenty-four years are thus left unconnected with the name of any king in Israel. The gap indicated whether in the history of Israel or in that of Judah might be filled by supposing either a regency or a period of anarchy, but the extreme brevity of the narrative makes it unsafe to construct theories to explain the chronological difficulties.

Azariah] So named seven times in this chapter, in xiv. 21, and 1 Chr. iii. 12. He is called *Uzziah* four times in this chapter and also in Isa. i. 1; vi. 1; Hos. i. 1; Amos i. 1; Zech. xiv. 5; and throughout 2 Chr. xxvi. The two forms of the name closely resemble each other in Hebrew; they differ moreover but little in meaning: *Uzziah*, 'JAH is my strength'; *Azariah*, 'JAH hath given help.' A much damaged inscription of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III. (745—727 B.C.) was once supposed (*Authority and Archaeology*, page 98) to refer to Azariah (Uzziah), but the identification is very uncertain.

3. *he did that which was right*] So also in Chron., though the Chronicler at a later point holds the king up as illustrating Divine punishment of presumption.

4 that his father Amaziah had done. Howbeit the high places
were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt
5 incense in the high places. And the LORD smote the king,
so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt
in a [1]several house. And Jotham the king's son was over
6 the household, judging the people of the land. Now the
rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they
not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
7 Judah? And Azariah slept with his fathers; and they
buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham
his son reigned in his stead.

8 In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah
did Zechariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in
9 Samaria six months. And he did that which was evil in the
sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed
not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith
10 he made Israel to sin. And Shallum the son of Jabesh
conspired against him, and smote him before the people,

[1] Or, *lazar house*

4. *Howbeit &c.*] Cp. xiv. 4.

5. *the LORD smote the king*] Cp. *v.* 37, 'The LORD began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah.' The phrase, *the LORD smote*, does not necessarily imply that the writer knew of some particular sin, such as that described in 2 Chr. xxvi. 16 ff., for which this leprosy was a punishment.

a several house] i.e. separate, special. Cp. vii. 3, note; Lev. xiii. 45, 46; Num. v. 2; xii. 14, 15. The Heb. word for *several* is used in Ps. lxxxviii. 5, '*cast off* (i.e. separate from the living) among the dead.'

was over the household] Cp. 1 K. iv. 6, note.

7. *in the city of David*] In Chron., *in the field of burial which belonged to the kings*, by which the Chronicler probably means a place outside the city.

8—12. THE REIGN OF ZECHARIAH OVER ISRAEL.

8. *In the thirty and eighth year*] If the date given in *v.* 1, and the length of reign assigned to Jeroboam in xiv. 23, be both correct, an interval of twenty-four years separated the death of Jeroboam from the accession of his son Zechariah. Cp. *v.* 1, note.

10. *before the people*] So Peshitta. The Heb. text here is corrupt, and cannot be translated. LXX. gives Κεβλαάμ, a simple transliteration of the Hebrew. Perhaps the right reading is 'in Ibleam' (ix. 27, note).

and slew him, and reigned in his stead. Now the rest of 11
the acts of Zechariah, behold, they are written in the book
of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. This was the 12
word of the LORD which he spake unto Jehu, saying, Thy
sons to the fourth generation shall sit upon the throne of
Israel. And so it came to pass.

Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine 13
and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned
the space of a month in Samaria. And Menahem the son 14
of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and
smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew
him, and reigned in his stead. Now the rest of the acts of 15
Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they
are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
Israel. Then Menahem smote Tiphsah, and all that were 16
therein, and the borders thereof, from Tirzah: because they
opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women
therein that were with child he ripped up.

In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah 17
began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, *and*
reigned ten years in Samaria. And he did that which was 18
evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days
from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he
made Israel to sin. There came against the land Pul the 19

12. *the word of the* LORD] Cp. x. 30.

13. *Uzziah*] i.e. Azariah. Cp. *v.* 1, note.

14. *Tirzah*] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 17, note. LXX. however gives Tharsila, of which the *Onomasticon* says, 'Even now there is a village of the Samaritans in Batanaea called *Tharsila*.' *Batanaea*, which partly preserves the Heb. name *Bashan*, is the Greek name for the south-eastern portion of eastern Palestine. According to this Menahem came from beyond Jordan.

16. *Tiphsah*] This can hardly be the Tiphsah (= *Thapsacus*) of 1 K. iv. 24. LXX. gives *Thersa* here. A slight change in the Heb. consonants would give us *Tappuah*, a town on the border of Ephraim and Manasseh (Josh. xvii. 8).

ripped up] Cp. viii. 12, note.

17—22. THE REIGN OF MENAHEM OVER ISRAEL.

18. *all his days*] An emphatic touch added to a usual phrase. Cp. 1 K. xvi. 26, 'in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.'

king of Assyria; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the
20 kingdom in his hand. And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there
21 in the land. Now the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the
22 chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Menahem slept with his fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.

23 In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria,
24 *and reigned* two years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to
25 sin. And Pekah the son of Remaliah, his captain, conspired

19. *Pul the king of Assyria*] Called *Tiglath-pileser* in *v.* 29; xvi. 7. The king meant is Tiglath-pileser III., who reigned 745—727 B.C. In the Babylonian list of kings preserved in the Inscriptions he appears as *Pulu*, but in the Babylonian Chronicle he is *Tukul-ti-abal-i-shar-ra*, and on his own inscriptions *Tuklat-abal-i-shar-ra*. The last becomes *Tiglath-pileser* in Hebrew. *Tilgath-pilneser* (1 Chr. v. 6; 2 Chr. xxviii. 20) is an erroneous form. In the Assyrian king's annals he records that he received among other tributes the 'present' of Menahem of the city of Samaria.

to confirm the kingdom in his hand] Menahem was a usurper, and probably there were rival claimants to the throne.

20. *exacted the money of Israel*] The construction of the Hebrew is crabbed; probably the compiler is greatly shortening the account before him.

fifty shekels of silver] i.e., according to some standards, a pound (*maneh*) of silver. Cp. 1 K. x. 17, note.

and stayed not] Had he stayed it would have been to appoint an Assyrian governor and to assign him troops to garrison Israel, but the Assyrian king was satisfied with Menahem's ready payment of tribute.

23—26. THE REIGN OF PEKAHIAH OVER ISRAEL.

25. *his captain*] Heb. *shālīsh*. Cp. vii. 2, note.

against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the [1]castle of the king's house, with Argob and Arieh; and with him were fifty men of the Gileadites: and he slew him, and reigned in his stead. Now the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and 26
all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah 27
Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* twenty years. And he did that which 28
was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin. In the days of Pekah king of Israel came 29
Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maacah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and

[1] Or, *palace*

in Samaria...with Argob and Arieh; and with him were fifty men of the Gileadites] The text of this passage is almost certainly corrupt. In the first place *Argob* and *Arieh*, which according to the context should be names of persons, are not found elsewhere as such; *Argob* on the contrary is a place name, being the designation of a district east of Jordan. Cp. 1 K. iv. 13; Deut. iii. 4, 13. Secondly, it is to be noted that in the Vulgate Jerome gives the translation, *in turre domus regiae iuxta Argob*, thus placing the assassination east of Jordan. (Possibly he took *Argob* as the name of the chief city of the district of Argob.) This view is in conflict with the words *in Samaria*, but it is supported by the mention of the *Gileadites*. Moreover as Pekahiah's father, Menahem, came (apparently) from Eastern Palestine (*v.* 14), it is probable that the king had a residence in that part of the country. Further the words *in Samaria, and Arieh*, have in Hebrew the appearance of being scribal blunders (instances of dittography). If we omit these words, we may reconstruct the passage somewhat as follows, *and smote him in the castle of the king's house near Argob and with him fifty men of the Gileadites.*

the castle of the king's house] Cp. 1 K. xvi. 18, note.

27—31. THE REIGN OF PEKAH OVER ISRAEL.

29. *In the days of Pekah king of Israel*] We should expect simply *in his days*, but the use of the fuller form shews that the compiler is quoting from a fresh source.

Tiglath-pileser] Cp. *v.* 19, note.

Ijon, and Abel-beth-maacah] Cp. 1 K. xv. 20, notes.

Janoah] The only known *Janoah* was in the centre of Western Palestine, in the territory of Ephraim; Josh. xvi. 6. Probably some unknown city in the extreme north of the land is meant here.

Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried
30 them captive to Assyria. And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, in the
31 twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah. Now the rest

Kedesh] Mentioned as a city of Naphtali in Josh. xix. 37; Jud. iv. 6. It stands on a height west of Lake Hûleh in the far north of Palestine.

Hazor] Cp. 1 K. ix. 15, note.

Gilead] Cp. 1 K. iv. 19.

Galilee] LXX. τὴν Γαλειλαίαν (Γαλιλαίαν), just as in the Gospels. It does not, however, appear that the district meant here was equal in extent to the province known in New Testament times as *Galilee*. In Hebrew it is called variously, 'The Gālīl' (i.e. perhaps the *Circuit*), 'The land of the Gālīl,' or 'The *Gālīl* of the Nations.' The *Kedesh* mentioned in this verse is described in Josh. xx. 7 as *Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali*. Cp. 1 K. ix. 11, note. Plainly *Galilee* did not include all Naphtali.

carried them captive] The policy of Assyrian kings was to re-distribute the population of their empire. They had two objects in view They wanted first to break the old ties of place and kindred in those who had newly become their subjects, and secondly to create a new tie of direct dependence upon the great king who ruled in Nineveh. That the old ties might be completely broken the captives were moved to very great distances, Israelites to the cities of the Medes (xvii. 6), Babylonians on the other hand to the land of Israel (xvii. 24). The transported populations were taught to feel that they had received their new holdings from the king of Assyria (xviii. 32), and a kind of feudal relationship was established of which later generations were even proud (Ezra iv. 2, 10). The mixture of peoples brought about by these measures was complete in the districts dealt with (xvii. 24; Ezra iv. 9). Sargon (*K.I.B.* II. 50) in describing the building of the great city which bore his name says that he settled within it 'men from the four quarters of the world,' and set Assyrians over them to keep them faithful. It must be added that large bodies of captives were also taken to serve as labourers for the execution of the vast building works undertaken by successive kings.

30. *Hoshea...made a conspiracy*] The conspiracy was doubtless made either on the expectation or on the assurance of the support of the king of Assyria. Tiglath-pileser himself in his Annals represents the substitution of Hoshea for Pekah as his own work: 'The land of the house of Omri[1]...the whole of its inhabitants together with their goods I carried off to Assyria. Pekah their king I slew. Hoshea I appointed to rule over them.' (*K.I.B.* II. 32.)

in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah] These words are corrupt. Jotham reigned sixteen years (*v.* 33); Hoshea began to

[1] Cp. 1 K. xvi. 27, note.

of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king 32
of Israel began Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to
reign. Five and twenty years old was he when he began 33
to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and
his mother's name was Jerusha the daughter of Zadok. And 34
he did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD: he
did according to all that his father Uzziah had done.
Howbeit the high places were not taken away: the people 35
still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places. He
built the upper gate of the house of the LORD. Now the 36
rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they
not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
Judah? In those days the LORD began to send against Judah 37
Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah.
And Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his 38
fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son
reigned in his stead.

In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah 16
Ahaz the son of Jotham king of Judah began to reign.
Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign; and 2

reign in the fourth or fifth year of Ahaz the son of Jotham. Cp. note on xvii. 1.

31. *the rest of the acts*] See also *v.* 37; xvi. 5.

32—38 (= 2 Chr. xxvii. 1—9). THE REIGN OF JOTHAM.

32. *In the second year of Pekah*] Cp. *v.* 27.

35. *Howbeit the high places &c.*] Cp. *v.* 4; xiv. 4.

the upper gate] In 2 Chr. xxiii. 20 'the upper gate' is mentioned as already existing in the time of Joash. Jotham's building may therefore have been a re-building.

37. *the LORD began to send*] Cp. *v.* 5 for this direct attribution of a calamity to the agency of the God of Israel. The word *began* implies that there was some threatening of Judah and perhaps a despatch of marauding bands (cp. xiii. 20), before the expedition against Jerusalem (xvi. 5) was undertaken.

CH. XVI. **1—4** (= 2 Chr. xxviii. 1—4). THE REIGN OF AHAZ.

Isaiah, who prophesied from the times of Azariah (Uzziah) to those of Hezekiah, complains bitterly of the prevalence of foreign influences

he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and he did not that
which was right in the eyes of the LORD his God, like David
3 his father. But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel,
yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according
to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast
4 out from before the children of Israel. And he sacrificed
and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and
5 under every green tree. Then Rezin king of Syria and

among the Jews of his day. Foreign fashions, foreign superstitions, and foreign cults filled the land of Judah (Isa. ii. 6—9). The compiler of the book of Kings in his brief notices of the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham says nothing on this subject, but in his account of Ahaz given in this chapter he shews us Judah in the grip of the foreigner. The king practises the worship of Molech, and builds an altar after an Assyrian pattern. He is at war with Syria, and calls in Assyria to his help. These foreign entanglements proved ruinous to Judah religiously and politically. In the words of the Chronicler, 'they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel' (2 Chr. xxviii. 23).

3. *in the way of the kings of Israel*] He sacrificed in the high places (*v.* 4), like Jeroboam (1 K. xii. 31) and Jeroboam's successors (1 K. xv. 25, 26; *al.*). Of the four predecessors of Ahaz it is recorded only that they did not remove the high places, and that the *people* used them. Ahaz therefore is blamed for taking part in person in high-place worship. Of his grandson and imitator, Manasseh, it is recorded that he 'made an Asherah, as did Ahab king of Israel' (xxi. 3). It is probable therefore that the grandfather did the same, and in this matter also 'walked in the way of the kings of Israel.'

made his son to pass through the fire] This is the usual phrase. See xvii. 17; xxi. 6; xxiii. 10. Another phrase is *make to pass through to Molech.* See Lev. xviii. 21; Jer. xxxii. 35. In Chron. *he burnt...in the fire.* Cp. 1 K. xi. 5, note on *Milcom.* Two human sacrifices by fire are recorded in the Old Testament, in Jud. xi. 39 (cp. *v.* 31, Jephthah); and in 2 K. iii. 27 (the king of Moab). Such practices are forbidden in the Law (Lev. xviii. 21; Deut. xviii. 10); and condemned by the Prophets (Jer. xxxii. 35; Mic. vi. 7). Gen. xxii. 1—18 may be said to suggest the substitution of spiritual for material sacrifices, as far as human victims are concerned.

4. *in the high places*] Cp. 1 K. xi. 7, note.

on the hills] Cp. xvii. 10; also Ezek. xviii. 6, 11, 15 where 'to eat upon the mountains' means to take part in the sacrifices offered on the high places.

under every green tree] The Heb. word used here for *green* means rather *flourishing.* Large trees are rare in Palestine and so form important land marks. Cp. Jud. iv. 5; 1 Sam. xxii. 6; xxxi. 13. In different ways such trees acquired a sacred or semi-sacred character, in some cases because they were associated with appearances of JEHOVAH or

Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath to 6 Syria, and drave the Jews from [1]Elath: and the [2]Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there, unto this day. So Ahaz 7

[1] Heb. *Eloth* [2] According to another reading, *Edomites*

of the Angel of JEHOVAH (Gen. xviii. 1; Jud. vi. 11), in others perhaps because the flourishing condition of the tree was ascribed to the beneficence of some deity who inhabited the spot. For a nobler form of this last thought cp. Ps. civ. 16.

5—9 (cp. 2 Chr. xxviii. 5—21; Isa. vii. 1—9). THE SYRO-EPHRAIMITE WAR.

From Isa. vii. 5, 6 we learn that the object of this attack was to depose Ahaz and to make a certain Ben Tabeel ('Son of Tabeel') king in his place. The ultimate object no doubt was to force Judah into an alliance with Syria and Israel against the advancing power of Assyria. In the year 740 B.C., shortly before Ahaz came to the throne, Tiglath-pileser captured after a three years' siege the important fortress of Arpad in Northern Syria, and made the state of which it was the capital an Assyrian province. It became clear that the Assyrian king would not long remain content with a formal submission such as Menahem had given him (xv. 19, 20), but would seek to incorporate Syria in his empire. In the presence of this danger the old enemies, Israel and Syria, united and strove to force Judah to join the alliance against Assyria.

5. *Rezin*] This form is given also in Isa. vii. 1, 8, but LXX. in 2 K. xvi. 5, 6, 9 gives Ῥαασσών, i.e. *Rezon*, as in 1 K. xi. 23. With this latter form agrees *Raṣunnu*, the name given to this king in the Annals of Tiglath-pileser.

Pekah] See xv. 27—31.

could not overcome him] Probably the allies did not proceed to extremities, for they had sympathizers in Jerusalem (Isa. viii. 6), and had reason to hope that the city would be delivered to them through fear or treachery.

6. *Elath*] Cp. 1 K. ix. 26, note.

to Syria...and the Syrians] This is the reading of the Hebrew text (*Kĕthīb*) and of the Peshitta. The form, however, of the Heb. word for *Syrians* given here is not the usual *Arammí*, but *Arummí*, with the obscure *ă* pronounced as *ŭ*. *Arummí* ('Syrian') written with the sign for this *ŭ* resembles closely *Adōmí* ('Edomite'), and in the Hebrew margin (the *Kĕrī*) and also in LXX. Vulg. Targ. the reading *Edomites* is actually found. Accordingly some scholars strike out *Rezin* as a gloss, and read *Edom* for *Aram* ('Syria') twice in the verse: *The king of Edom recovered Elath to Edom,...and the Edomites came to Elath.*

sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of
8 the king of Israel, which rise up against me. And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent
9 it for a present to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried *the people of*
10 it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin. And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and saw the altar that was at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern
11 of it, according to all the workmanship thereof. And Urijah

7. *Tiglath-pileser*] Cp. xv. 19, note. Asa, a predecessor of Ahaz, had set the example of calling in foreign aid (1 K. xv. 18).

thy son] Cp. viii. 9, note.

8. *a present*] Both in Hebrew and in Assyrian *tribute* is called a 'gift,' but the Assyrians regarded a king as rebellious, if he did not send his 'gift' regularly. Cp. xvii. 4.

9. *and took it*] Tiglath-pileser according to the Assyrian records marched southward through Palestine in 734 B.C. and reached Gaza. Probably on his way he inflicted some decisive check on Rezin, but Damascus held out until 732 B.C. when it fell, after its territory had been ravaged in two campaigns. The Assyrian records are, however, much injured, and the fate of Rezin is not recorded on the fragments which remain. (*K. A. T.* ed. 3, pages 55—57.) For Tiglath-pileser's dealings with Israel see xv. 29, 30, with the notes.

to Kir] Cp. Amos i. 5, where this event is foretold. LXX. (B) omits the words, but LXX. (A) has Κυρήνηνδε, 'to Cyrene,' so also Vulg., but the identification cannot be correct, for Cyrene (in North Africa) never, so far as we know, fell into the hands of the Assyrians. Modern Assyriologists identify *Kir* (read as *Kōr*) with the land of *Kares* mentioned by Arrian (III. 8. 5) as adjoining *Sittacēne*. Both these districts lay east of the Tigris and bordered on Elam.

10—18 (cp. 2 Chron. xxviii. 22—25). THE RELIGIOUS MEASURES OF AHAZ.

10. *went...to meet*] i.e. went to pay homage to. The same phrase is used of Josiah in xxiii. 29.

the altar] Assyrian kings carried portable altars with them on their campaigns.

Urijah the priest] Isa. viii. 2 (called 'Uriah'). For the title *the priest* cp. xi. 9, note.

the priest built an altar: according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus, so did Urijah the priest make it against king Ahaz came from Damascus. And when the 12
king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar: and the king drew near unto the altar, and [1]offered thereon. And he burnt his burnt offering and his meal offering, and 13
poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of [2]his peace offerings, upon the altar. And the brasen altar, 14
which was before the LORD, he brought from the forefront of the house, from between his altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of his altar. And king 15
Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the great altar burn the morning burnt offering, and the evening meal offering, and the king's burnt offering, and his meal offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their meal offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood

[1] Or, *went up unto it* [2] Heb. *the peace offerings which were his*

11. *against king Ahaz came*] For this English construction cp. Gen. xliii. 25, 'against Joseph came at noon'; Exod. vii. 15 (A.V.), 'against he come.'

12. *offered thereon*] Or (as marg. and LXX.), *went up unto it.*

13. *And he burnt*] From this and the preceding verse it is clear that the king himself acted the priest's part. Though no blame is expressed, it is clear that the writer of Kings regarded the action of Ahaz as unusual, but it does not appear that he looked upon it with the horror with which Uzziah's usurpation of the priestly office filled the Chronicler (2 Chr. xxvi. 16 ff.).

meal offering] Cp. 1 K. viii. 64, note.

drink offering] With each lamb offered as a burnt offering a quarter of a *hin* of wine was to be offered as a drink offering (Exod. xxix. 40; Lev. xxiii. 13). Drink offerings were in use among the Assyrians as well as among the Greeks and Romans.

peace offerings] Cp. 1 K. iii. 15; viii. 63.

14. *the brasen altar, which was before the LORD*] Cp. 1 K. viii. 64.

15. *Upon the great altar*] The new altar was doubtless larger than the old brasen altar, which indeed was found to be too small to receive all the sacrifices of Solomon's Dedication Feast.

the morning burnt offering, and the evening meal offering] Cp. Ezek. xlvi. 13—15. According to Exod. xxix. 38—41 a lamb was to be offered both morning and evening. This was called the *'ōlath tāmid* 'continual burnt offering' (Dan. xii. 11).

of the sacrifice: but the brasen altar shall be for me to
16 inquire by. Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all
17 that king Ahaz commanded. And king Ahaz cut off the
[1]borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them;
and took down the sea from off the brasen oxen that were
18 under it, and put it upon a pavement of stone. And the
[2]covered way for the sabbath that they had built in the
house, and the king's entry without, turned he [3]unto
the house of the LORD, because of the king of Assyria.
19 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, are they
not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
20 Judah? And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and was buried
with his fathers in the city of David: and Hezekiah his son
reigned in his stead.

[1] Or, *panels* [2] Or, *covered place* [3] Or, *round*

for me to inquire by] The meaning of this phrase is doubtful. Enquiry was made of JEHOVAH by means of a priest wearing the Urim and Thummim on his ephod (1 Sam. xxiii. 6—12; Ezra ii. 62, 63), but not (so far as we know) by means of an altar. The phrase may perhaps mean *for me to consider* what shall be done with it.

16. *Thus did Urijah*] The kings from David and Solomon downwards asserted their right of control over matters connected with worship. Cp. xii. 4 ff.; xviii. 4; xxii. 3.

17. *borders*] Cp. 1 K. vii. 28, note.

the laver] There were ten lavers according to 1 K. vii. 38.

18. *turned he unto*] According to marg. he made this entry encompass the Temple.

because of the king of Assyria] Cp. *v.* 10.

19, 20. AHAZ SUCCEEDED BY HEZEKIAH.

20. *Hezekiah*] This is a hybrid form of the name, being compounded of the Ἐζεκίας of the LXX. (*Ezechias* in the Vulgate) and the Hebrew *Ḥizkijah* (xviii. 1, 14) or *Ḥizkijahu* (here and in xviii. 19). The meaning of the name is 'Jah (Jahu) is my strength.' See xviii. 1—8.

CH. XVII. 1—6 (cp. xviii. 9—11). THE REIGN OF HOSHEA AND THE FATE OF SAMARIA.

The course of events is not easily to be gathered from this passage. Hoshea had been appointed king by Tiglath-pileser (xv. 30, note), on the usual condition of paying tribute to Assyria. After Tiglath-pileser's death he no doubt ceased to pay, for Shalmaneser 'came

In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea 17
the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel, *and reigned*
nine years. And he did that which was evil in the sight 2
of the LORD, yet not as the kings of Israel that were before
him. Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; 3
and Hoshea became his servant, and brought him presents.
And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for 4
he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and offered

up against him' and exacted 'presents' (*v.* 3). After a few years Hoshea again withheld his tribute, and so the king of Assyria 'shut him up and bound him in prison.' Then followed the siege of Samaria. But *vv.* 5, 6 seem to come from a source different from that of *vv.* 3, 4, and the order of events may have been inverted. It has been suggested that the latter verses come from the Israelite Annals, while *vv.* 5, 6 (cp. xviii. 9—11) come from the Annals of the Southern Kingdom.

1. *In the twelfth year of Ahaz...began Hoshea...to reign*] This date can hardly be right. Ahaz came to the throne in the seventeenth year of Pekah (xvi. 1), and Pekah reigned twenty years (xv. 27), so that the throne of Israel became vacant in the *fourth* year of Ahaz. But Hoshea succeeded Pekah (xv. 30, in agreement with the Assyrian Annals), and there is no trace of an interregnum, so that we should read *fourth* year for *twelfth*. This reckoning brings the fall of Samaria and consequently the whole of the reign of Hoshea within the period occupied by the reign of Ahaz in Judah. The reading *twelfth* together with the chronological statements of xviii. 9, 10, which represent the reigns of Hoshea and Hezekiah as partly contemporaneous, must be given up. Cp. note on xviii. 13, in *the fourteenth year of Hezekiah.*

began Hoshea...to reign] For the circumstances see xv. 30, with note.

2. *that which was evil*] A reference probably to his breach of faith with Assyria. Compare what is said of Zedekiah in Ezek. xvii. 11—16.

3. *Shalmaneser*] In Assyrian, *Shulman-asharid.* He was the fourth king who bore this name. He succeeded Tiglath-pileser III., 'Pul' (cp. xv. 19, note) in 727 B.C., and reigned till 722 B.C., when he was succeeded by Sargon (Isa. xx. 1), the father of Sennacherib. No inscriptions of his have been preserved. It is very improbable that *Shalman* in Hos. x. 14 means Shalmaneser IV.

presents] Cp. xvi. 8, note.

4. *So king of Egypt* (Mizraim)] The name *So*, read with different vowels, may be pronounced *Seve* or *Seva*, a pronunciation which would bring it into close correspondence with the *Sib'e* of the Assyrian Annals. This *Sib'e* is mentioned by Sargon as the *turtan*, 'commander-in-chief,' of *Muçri* who in 720 B.C. came to the help of Hanun of Gaza in his revolt against Assyria. After the defeat of *Hanun* and *Sib'e* the *Pir'u* (Pharaoh) of *Muçri* paid tribute. There is no reasonable doubt that the word *Muçri* of the Annals and *Mizraim* of the book of Kings both mean *Egypt* in its usual sense. Who then

no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound
5 him in prison. Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it
6 three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away unto Assyria, and placed them in Halah, and in Habor, *on* the river of
7 Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. And it was so,

was the person called *Seve king of Egypt* in the Bible and *Sib'e commander-in-chief of Egypt* in Sargon's inscription? It is not improbable that it was *Shabaka*, who was king of Egypt (circ. 715—705 B.C.), and 'was acting as regent, and is entitled king of Egypt as early as 725 B.C., acting for either Pankhy I. or Kashta' (Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*, III 282). If the termination *-ka* represents, as has been suggested, the article, a shortening of the name in popular use to such a form as *Seve* or *Sib'e* is only to be expected. The *Pir'u* of Sargon's inscription would be the Pharaoh, Pankhy I. or Kashta.

shut him up] Shalmaneser caught and imprisoned Hoshea first, and then (*v.* 5) proceeded to lay siege to Samaria.

5. *Then the king*] Better, **And the king.**

three years] Samaria was a strong city. Cp. 1 K. xvi. 24, note.

6. *the king of Assyria took Samaria*] This happened in the year 722 B.C., the year in which Shalmaneser was succeeded by Sargon. In the Assyrian Annals Sargon claims the achievement for himself, 'The city of Samirina I besieged, I captured; 27,290 men dwelling within it I took as spoil; fifty chariots I took in the midst thereof.'

carried Israel away] Thus completing the work begun by Tiglath-pileser. Cp. xv. 29, with note.

in Halah &c.] 'The countries in which the captive Ephraimites were placed as settlers, were Mesopotamia and Media. The Habūr (Chaboras) is the river which waters the Assyrian province of Guzanu (Gozan), and Halah is mentioned as a district which cannot have been far distant from Harran (Haran).' Winckler, *K.A.T.* ed. 3, p. 269.

7—23 (cp. xviii. 12). The Indictment of Israel.

This passage has probably received some additions (e.g. the references to Judah) to its original form, so that its unity is obscured; it may however be analysed as follows:

(1) The cause of the overthrow was that Israel practised the sins of the nations dispossessed by Israel (*vv.* 7—12).

(2) Israel (and Judah) rejected the warning given for these sins by the prophets (*vv.* 13, 14).

(3) Israel practised the sins of the neighbouring nations in spite of timely warning, i.e. made Asherah, worshipped the host of heaven,

because the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, and walked in the statutes of the nations, 8
whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they [1]made. And the 9
children of Israel did secretly things that were not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up [2]pillars and Asherim upon 10
every high hill, and under every green tree: and there they 11
burnt incense in all the high places, as did the nations whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger: and they 12

[1] Or, *practised* [2] Or, *obelisks*

served Baal, made their children pass through the fire, and used enchantments (*vv.* 15—17).

(4) So God cast Israel (and Judah) out of His sight for their continuance in the sin of Jeroboam, and they were carried away to Assyria (*vv.* 18—23).

The passage as a whole is marked by a use of Deuteronomic phraseology; it comes no doubt from the hand of the editor of Kings. The mention of Judah shews that the passage as we have it is later than the captivity of Judah.

8. *statutes*] Heb. *hukkōth*, 'established customs,' especially religious customs.

and [in the statutes] *of the kings of Israel, which they made*] The 'statutes' here referred to are those connected with the calf-worship; but the construction is awkward, and the text may be corrupt. The phrase occurs in a different form in *v.* 19, 'in the statutes of Israel which they made.'

9. *did secretly things that were not right*] The rendering, 'did secretly' is not certain. If however the rendering is right, the reference is probably to such practices as are referred to in Isa. viii. 19 or Ezek. viii. 7—12, i.e. to necromancy or to occult ('in the dark') worship.

from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city] The 'towers' referred to are those which were erected in the open country for the protection of flocks from bands of marauders. Cp. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10; xxvii. 4. The meaning of the phrase is that every kind of 'city,' small or great, had its high place.

10. *pillars and Asherim*] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 23, note.

upon every high hill, and under every green tree] Cp. xvi. 4, notes.

11. *wrought wicked things*] This translation correctly reproduces the present Heb. text, but this text appears to be a euphemistic gloss of an older reading. Cp. *v.* 9, 'things that were not right.'

served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye
13 shall not do this thing. Yet the LORD testified unto Israel, and unto Judah, by the hand of every prophet, and of every seer, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to
14 you by the hand of my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their neck, like to the neck of their fathers, who believed not in the LORD
15 their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified unto them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and *went* after the nations that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them
16 that they should not do like them. And they forsook all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made an Asherah, and

12. *idols*] Heb. *gillūlīm*. Cp. 1 K. xv. 12, note.

13. *testified unto Israel*] i.e. warned Israel. The same Heb expression is used 1 K. ii. 42, '[I] protested unto thee.'

all the law] Or, *all the torah*. *Torah* usually translated 'law' means properly 'teaching, guidance'; it describes equally well the prophet's message or the directions of the Law.

14. *hardened their neck*] Lit. *made their neck stiff*. A *stiff neck* is a figure of obstinacy and self-will. Cp. Job xv. 26; Ps. lxxv. 5.

believed not in the LORD] This expression, so common in the New Testament, is rare enough in the Old Testament to be remarkable. Cp. Gen. xv. 6; Exod. xiv. 31; Deut. i. 32; Ps. lxxviii. 22. Even in some of these passages the belief spoken of is something less than the whole-hearted confidence in a Person, which is Faith in the Christian sense.

15. *his covenant*] Cp. 1 K. xix. 10.

vanity] LXX. τῶν ματαίων, 'vanities,' i.e. idols. Cp. 1 K. xvi. 13, note.

and became vain] The same play upon *vanity* and *vain* is found in Jer. ii. 5. Cp. Ps. cxv. 8, 'They that make them (i.e. images) shall be *like* unto them'; and Rom. i. 21, ἐματαιώθησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν, 'they (i.e. the worshippers of images) became vain in their reasonings.' Israel became 'vain,' i.e. empty of reason, because they worshipped irrational things.

16. *and made them molten images, even two calves*] This was the native idolatry of Israel, and it does not agree well with the mention of the foreign deities, Asherah, the host of heaven, and Baal, which follow. The calf-worship was a worship of JEHOVAH, though of a

worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And 17
they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through
the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold
themselves to do that which was evil in the sight of the
LORD, to provoke him to anger. Therefore the LORD 18
was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his
sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.
Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their 19
God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they [1]made.
And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted 20

[1] Or, *practised*

degraded kind (1 K. xii. 28). The words, *even two calves*, may be a later addition to the text.

an Asherah] Rather, **Asherah** (without the article, i.e. the goddess). Cp. *vv.* 30, 31; 1 K. xviii. 19.

the host of heaven] Cp. xxi. 3; xxiii. 5; Deut. iv. 19. In this we may see Babylonian influence, for in Babylonia, it has been said, stars were gods, and gods were stars. Stars when above the horizon were *Igigi*, 'gods of heaven,' when below they were *Anunnaki*, 'gods of earth' (i.e. of the underworld). Worship was paid specially to the seven planets and (it seems) to the twelve signs of the Zodiac. The twelve signs are found inscribed upon stones, supposed to be 'boundary stones,' which are earlier than 1000 B.C. Cp. *K.A.T.* ed. 3, pages 451 ff., 626 ff.

Baal] Cp. 1 K. xviii. 18, note on *Baalim*.

17. *divination*] Heb. *ḳĕsāmīm* (pl. of *ḳesem*). The corresponding Arabic root is used of divining by drawing headless arrows at a sanctuary.

[and used] *enchantments*] The same Heb. word, *niḥēsh*, is used in 1 K. xx. 33, 'took it (i.e. a certain expression used by the king of Israel) as an omen.' LXX. *οἰωνίζοντο*, which means to 'take omens from the flight or screams of birds,' but there is nothing to shew that this special kind of divination is meant here.

18. *out of his sight*] Rather, **from his presence**. Cp. 1 K. ix. 7.

the tribe of Judah only] Cp. 1 K. xi. 13, note; xii. 21, note.

19. *in the statutes of Israel*] Cp. viii. 18; Mic. i. 13.

20. *And the LORD rejected* (**refused**) *all the seed of Israel*] Three stages in the LORD's dealings with Israel (i.e. the northern kingdom) are indicated in this verse: (1) He *refused* them, i.e. He preferred Judah; cp. Ps. lxxviii. 67, 68; (2) He *delivered* them to spoilers, i.e. to the Syrians and their allies during the prolonged wars with Syria from Baasha to Jeroboam II.; (3) He *cast them out* of His presence by sending them into Assyrian Captivity from which as a people they never returned.

them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until
21 he had cast them out of his sight. For he rent Israel from
the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of
Nebat king: and Jeroboam [1]drave Israel from following the
22 LORD, and made them sin a great sin. And the children
of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did;
23 they departed not from them; until the LORD removed
Israel out of his sight, as he spake by the hand of all his
servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away out of
their own land to Assyria, unto this day.
24 And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon,

[1] According to another reading, *drew Israel away*

21. *rent*] Cp. 1 K. xi. 30, 31.

drave] The reading of the Hebrew is uncertain; the text (*Kĕthīb*) has *yadda*, 'drew away'; the margin (*Ḳĕri*) has *yaddaḥ*, 'drave, banished.' Cp. 1 K. xii. 28—33.

from following the LORD] This was the ultimate result, but Jeroboam's intention was simply to keep his people from resorting to Solomon's temple.

23. *to Assyria*] Cp. the more definite statement of *v.* 6.

24—41. THE ORIGIN OF THE CORRUPT WORSHIP OF THE SAMARITANS.

This passage falls naturally into three divisions:

(1) **24—28.** The foreign settlers are instructed how to 'fear the LORD' by an Israelite priest sent to them by the Assyrians.

(2) **29—34 a.** The foreign settlers continue to serve their own gods; hence arises a fusion of worships.

(3) **34 b—41.** This mixed worship is not according to the covenant of the Law.

This passage appears to have been written long after the capture of Samaria by the Assyrians. Cp. *v.* 29 (use of the name 'Samaritans'); *v.* 34 ('the former manners'...'unto this day'); *v.* 41 ('children and children's children unto this day'). Probably the passage was written after the Jews on returning from Captivity in Babylon came into unfriendly relations with the 'Samaritans.'

24—28. THE FOREIGN SETTLERS INSTRUCTED HOW TO FEAR THE LORD.

24. *the king of Assyria*] More than one Assyrian king seems to have settled colonists in the land of Israel. Sargon (*v.* 6, note) says in one of his inscriptions that he placed the remnant of four peoples whom he conquered in *Bît Ḫumri*, 'the place of Omri,' i.e. the land of Israel (*Authority and Archaeology*, pp. 101—2). In Ezra iv. 2, 10 some of the foreign inhabitants claimed to have been brought to

and from Cuthah, and from Avva, and from Hamath and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof. And so it was, at the 25
beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which killed some of them. Wherefore they spake to the king of 26
Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast carried away, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land. Then the king of 27
Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land. So one of the priests whom they had carried 28
away from Samaria came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught

Palestine by Esar-haddon (xix. 37), while others owed their transplantation to Osnappar, i.e. Asshur-bani-pal, the son and successor of Esar-haddon.

Babylon] Ezra iv. 9.

Cuthah] Called *Cuth* in *v.* 30, and *Kutu* in the inscriptions, situated on the Euphrates north of Babylon. *Sepharvaim* (if it be the *Sippar* of the inscriptions) lay still further north on a canal of the Euphrates, but within the limits of Babylonia.

Avva] Possibly the same place as *Ivvah* (xviii. 34, note), but nothing is at present known about it.

Hamath] See 1 K. viii. 65, note.

possessed] In modern English, *took possession of*. Cp. Josh. xviii. 3, 'How long are ye slack to go in to possess the land?'

25. *the LORD sent lions*] The immediate cause of this incursion of wild beasts was no doubt the depopulation of the country. Cp. Exod. xxiii. 29. So Isaiah foretells that Judah will become jungle, and that means of defence against wild beasts will become necessary in districts once cultivated (Isa. vii. 23—25; cp. Jer. v. 6).

26. *to the king of Assyria*] Which king is meant, we can only guess. Sargon and his three successors, Sennacherib, Esar-haddon, and Asshur-bani-pal, all had to give a good deal of attention to the countries adjacent to the Mediterranean.

27. *one of the priests...and let them go*] Probably we should omit *one*, and read simply *of the priests*, and (later in the verse) *let them teach*.

28. *Beth-el*] The seat of the calf-worship as long as the kingdom of Israel remained (1 K. xii. 29; Hosea x. 5 (*Beth-aven = Beth-el*); Amos vii. 13).

29 them how they should fear the LORD. Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every
30 nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made
31 Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima, and the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech,

29—34 a. THE FOREIGN SETTLERS CONTINUE TO SERVE THEIR OWN GODS.

29. *Howbeit every nation*] **And every nation.**

the Samaritans] The earliest mention by name of the mixed nation which took the place of 'Israel' (*v.* 23). The next mention of the 'Samaritans' in the Bible is in the New Testament. No doubt a considerable number of the poorer Israelites remained in the land and formed an important element in the new population.

30. *Succoth-benoth*] This double name offers some difficulties. Two explanations are possible. (1) If we take *succōth* as a pure Heb. word meaning 'booths,' *benoth* is probably to be explained as a corruption of *banītu*, an epithet of the goddess *Ishtar* in her character as Venus: *succoth-Benoth* will then mean the booths erected for impure rites outside the temple of Ishtar. (2) On the other hand, *Succoth* may be a corrupt form of *Sakkut* (*Siccuth*, Amos v. 26) the name of a planet-god (Mars or Saturn) worshipped by the Babylonians; in this case the second element (*benoth*) is probably to be struck out of the text as an instance of dittography.

Cuth] i.e. Cuthah (*v.* 24).

Nergal] The Sun-god in his harmful aspect, as the god of scorching heat, of fever, and of pestilence. He has been compared with Molech. Cp. 1 K. xi. 5, note on *Milcom*.

Ashima] LXX. ἀσειμάθ. No deity bearing such a name is known. It may be, however, that we have here one of the depreciatory terms (like *Bosheth* for *Baal*; cp. 1 K. xi. 5, notes), which are sometimes substituted in the Old Testament for the names of false gods. In Amos viii. 14 the god (probably the golden calf) of the northern kingdom is called 'the *sin* (Heb. *ashmath*) of Samaria.'

31. *the Avvites*] The inhabitants of Avva (*v.* 24).

Nibhaz] The reading of this name is uncertain. *Nibhaz* cannot be identified with any known name of a deity.

Tartak] No light has hitherto been thrown on this name.

Adrammelech] This is a compound name signifying 'Adar the king.' But since no Babylonian deity named 'Adar' is known, Assyriologists propose to read *Adad* (*Hadad*) in place of it. *Hadad*, called also *Rimmon* (*Ramman*), was primarily the storm-god of the Babylonians. In the Chaldean account of the Flood he is described as *bêl abūbi*, 'lord of the Flood.'

the [1]gods of Sepharvaim. So they feared the LORD, and made unto them from among themselves priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away. Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law or after the commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel; with whom the LORD had made a covenant, and charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them: but the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a stretched out arm, him shall ye fear, and unto him shall ye bow yourselves, and to him shall ye sacrifice: and the statutes and the ordinances, and the law and the commandment, which he wrote for you, ye shall observe to

32 33 34 35 36 37

[1] Or, *god*

Anammelech] *Anu* was the Babylonian god of Heaven, 'the father or king in the family of the gods.'

Sepharvaim] Cp. *v.* 24, note.

32. *from among themselves priests*] Cp. 1 K. xii. 31, 'priests from among all the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.' The anxiety of the Jews for the purity in descent of their own priests is illustrated by Ezra ii. 61—63. The worship at high places has been condemned explicitly or implicitly throughout this book beginning from 1 K. iii. 2, 3.

34 b—41. THIS WORSHIP NOT ACCORDING TO THE COVENANT OF THE LAW.

34. *they fear not the LORD*] The contradiction between this statement and that of *v.* 33 is purely verbal. The Samaritans 'feared the LORD' in an external sense, for part of their worship was offered to Him; in a deeper sense they 'did not fear the LORD,' for they broke regularly one of His chief commandments, namely, to acknowledge no other God.

after their statutes, or after their ordinances] Read, **after his** (i.e. JEHOVAH'S) **statutes, or after his ordinances.** Only a slight correction of the Hebrew is needed to obtain this reading.

Jacob, whom he named Israel] Cp. Gen. xxxii. 28; xxxv. 10.

35. *Ye shall not fear other gods, &c.*] Cp. Deut. vi. 13—15.

37. *which he wrote for you*] Cp. Deut. v. 22.

38 do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods: and the
covenant that I have made with you ye shall not forget;
39 neither shall ye fear other gods: but the LORD your God
shall ye fear; and he shall deliver you out of the hand of
40 all your enemies. Howbeit they did not hearken, but they
41 did after their former manner. So these nations feared the
LORD, and served their graven images; their children like-
wise, and their children's children, as did their fathers, so
do they unto this day.

18 Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of
Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king
2 of Judah began to reign. Twenty and five years old was he
when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine
years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Abi the
3 daughter of Zechariah. And he did that which was right in
the eyes of the LORD, according to all that David his father

38. *ye shall not forget*] Cp. Deut. iv. 23.

40. *but they did*] Rather, **but they do.**

41. *unto this day*] The form of expression used in this verse suggests that it was written some time after the return from Captivity, when the impossibility of making any religious union with the Samaritans was fully realised.

CH. XVIII. 1—8 (cp. 2 Chr. xxix. 1, 2). THE REIGN OF HEZEKIAH.

This summary is longer than usual, so that the king's rebellion against Assyria and his war against the Philistines both find mention. It has been suggested that *v.* 4 *a* (i.e. as far as 'Asherah') is an interpolation, on the ground that Josiah's removal of the high places is narrated in ch. xxiii. as though it were altogether a new measure. The proof, however, is insufficient, and on the other side it may be said that a removal of high places is ascribed to Hezekiah in an independent passage, i.e. in *v.* 22.

1. *in the third year of Hoshea*] This date is probably not correct. See xvii. 1, note.

2. *Abi*] In Chron., *Abijah.*

3. *David his father*] This praise is given in Kings to none of Hezekiah's predecessors except Asa. Hezekiah (*v.* 4) made, like Asa (1 K. xv. 12, 13), a vigorous attempt to put down idolatrous practices.

had done. He removed the high places, and brake the 4
pillars, and cut down the Asherah: and he brake in pieces
the brasen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those
days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and [1]he
called it [2]Nehushtan. He trusted in the LORD, the God 5
of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all
the kings of Judah, nor *among them* that were before him.
For he clave to the LORD, he departed not from following 6
him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD com-
manded Moses. And the LORD was with him; whither- 7
soever he went forth he prospered: and he rebelled against
the king of Assyria, and served him not. He smote the 8

[1] Or, *it was called* [2] That is, *A piece of brass*

4. *He removed the high places*] Not the high places themselves, for they were only level spaces, but all the furniture belonging to them, altar, Asherah, monoliths, &c. Cp. *v.* 22.

pillars] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 23.

the brasen serpent] Num. xxi. 8, 9. The statement that Moses made this serpent which Hezekiah destroyed may simply represent the excuse offered by those Israelites who burnt incense to it. Some of the Assyrian reliefs shew persons worshipping a serpent set upon a standard. (A. Jeremias, *Das A. T. im Lichte des alten Orients*, page 322, figure 111.) The local deity of Dêr (Dur-ilu) in northern Babylonia is called a 'serpent-deity,' whose title was the 'Lord of Life.' The serpent of Aesculapius, the physician-god, has a similar significance.

he called it] If Hezekiah gave the name, it signified *a piece of brass* (marg.). But the margin, *it was called*, implies that *Nehushtan* was the popular name; if so, it meant, probably, 'the serpent-god.' Cp. *v.* 22, which supplements our knowledge of the religious policy of Hezekiah.

5. *so that after him was none*] The writer forgets for the moment Josiah, of whom he says almost the same thing. Cp. xxiii. 25.

6. *he clave to the LORD*] A favourite expression in Deuteronomy (x. 20; xi. 22; xiii. 4 [5]; xxx. 20). The expression implies an anthropomorphism (Ruth i. 14); LXX. gives here, 'he hoped in the LORD.'

7. *he rebelled*] As Ahaz his father paid tribute and made formal submission (xvi. 7, 8), this word is suitable here. Hezekiah was able no doubt to withhold tribute for several years before his fourteenth year (=701 B.C.), when Sennacherib forced him to submit.

8. *He smote the Philistines*] This probably occurred between 711 B.C., when the Assyrians marched into Philistia and put down the rebellion of Ashdod, and 701 B.C. when Sennacherib compelled Hezekiah to release Padi the pro-Assyrian king of Ekron. Hezekiah

Philistines unto Gaza and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

9 And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against
10 Samaria, and besieged it. And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was
11 taken. And the king of Assyria carried Israel away unto Assyria, and put them in Halah, and in Habor, *on* the river
12 of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes: because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, even all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear it, nor do it.

probably 'smote' the pro-Assyrian Philistines with the help of the contrary party among the Philistines.

from the tower of the watchmen &c.] Cp. xvii. 9, note.

9—12 (cp. xvii. 1—8). THE FALL OF SAMARIA.

9. *in the fourth year*] For this date cp. *v.* 1, note. This date cannot be reconciled with that given in *v.* 13 ('in the fourteenth year'). The regnal years of Hezekiah in *vv.* 9, 10 are probably a later addition to the text; they are not found in xvii. 5, 6.

10. *they took it*] The Heb. word might be read with other vowel points, *he took it*, in agreement with LXX. κατελάβετο, and Vulg. *cepit*. The conqueror was not Shalmaneser, but his successor Sargon. Cp. xvii. 6, note.

11. *in Halah, &c.*] Cp. xvii. 6, notes.

12. *because*] Cp. 1 K. ix. 6, 7.

CHS. XVIII. 13—XIX. 37.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The story of Sennacherib is told in chs. xviii. 13—xix. 37 in instalments, the editor of Kings having pieced together parts of different records in order to give as full an account as possible. There is a great break after xviii. 16, and a break almost equally abrupt after xix. 8. Thus the whole story falls into three chief passages as follows:

(1) xviii. 13—16. Sennacherib takes all the fenced cities of Judah. Hezekiah sends a submissive message to the Assyrian king *to Lachish*. Hezekiah pays a heavy fine to Sennacherib.

(2) xviii. 17—xix. 8. 'Tartan and Rab-saris and Rabshakeh' are sent *from Lachish* with a great host to Jerusalem. Rabshakeh

harangues the envoys of Hezekiah. Hezekiah sends a message to Isaiah asking for his prayers. Isaiah promises that Sennacherib shall *hear a report*, return to his own land, and there fall by the sword.

(3) xix. 9—34. Sennacherib hears that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia is advancing against him. He sends a threatening letter by the hand of 'messengers.' Hezekiah takes the letter into the House of the LORD and prays over it. Isaiah sends (unasked) a message to Hezekiah promising that the king of Assyria shall return without attacking Jerusalem, but does not assign any cause for this retirement.

Now the first two passages are knit together by the mention of Lachish as the headquarters of the king of Assyria. They are probably both to be taken as referring to the events of 701 B.C., 'the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah.' But the passages seem to be parallel rather than continuous. Both imply that Sennacherib did not take Jerusalem, but they are written from different points of view. The earlier (xviii. 13—16) is a simple piece of chronicle describing the circumstances under which Hezekiah after a time (cp. *v.* 7) submitted to Assyria and paid tribute. No comment of a religious character is added, and no hint is given of a Divine interposition to save Jerusalem from the invader. On the other hand, in xviii. 17—xix. 8, an account of the crisis is given from the religious standpoint. Thus viewed the main event was that the LORD did not allow Sennacherib to enter Jerusalem. The payment of tribute is not mentioned, perhaps because it was not the only reason for Sennacherib's retirement. The Assyrian king was hard to appease, and probably he would not have made an accommodation with a city which he boasts of having closely blockaded, if a report of distant troubles, perhaps in Babylonia, had not recalled him home. Hezekiah's tribute was a measure of insurance against a speedy return of Sennacherib.

The third passage (xix. 9—34) when carefully considered does not read like a natural continuation of the second. It is doubtful whether it can refer to the same crisis. It is true that the mention of *Tirhakah* king of Ethiopia may be tentatively reconciled with a date as early as 701 B.C., but this name rather suggests a date at least ten or eleven years later. So again the promise made in *v.* 32 is difficult to reconcile with the mention of the arrival of the Tartan and a great host before Jerusalem in xviii. 17, and with Sennacherib's explicit statement that he blockaded Jerusalem in 701 B.C. Finally, if Isaiah's second announcement (*vv.* 20 ff.) followed the first (*vv.* 6, 7) at an interval of a few days only, or at the most a few weeks, it is singular that the second should contain no allusion to the first.

On the whole, though the evidence is far from complete, it seems probable that Jerusalem was twice delivered from Sennacherib, namely in 701 B.C. and again more than ten years later. On the first occasion Jerusalem was blockaded by an Assyrian army (xviii. 17), on the second the Assyrians did not reach the city (xix. 32). In 701 B.C. Sennacherib retired owing to the receipt of bad news (xix. 7, 36, 37) from Babylon, in 689 B.C. (or some later year) owing to a disaster to his army (xix. 35). To the former occasion must be referred

13 Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did [1]Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced

[1] Heb. *Sanherib*

the two passages xviii. 13—16 and xviii. 17—xix. 8; to the latter xix. 9—34. The sequel to the earlier episode is found in xix. 36, 37, the sequel to the later in xix. 35. (On the whole question see G. A. Smith, *Sennacherib and Jerusalem*, in the *Expositor*, Sixth Series, vol. XII. pp. 215 ff.)

13—16 (cp. Isa. xxxvi. 1). THE SUBMISSION OF HEZEKIAH TO SENNACHERIB.

13. *in the fourteenth year*] This according to the Assyrian inscriptions was the third year of Sennacherib, i.e. 701 B.C. The fall of Samaria, which is fixed with the help of Assyrian chronology in 722 B.C., i.e. twenty-one years earlier, is stated in *v.* 9 to have occurred in the *sixth* year of Hezekiah, i.e. only eight years before Sennacherib's invasion of Judah. But the two Assyrian dates are unassailable, for room must be found between *v.* 9 ('Shalmaneser') and *v.* 13 ('Sennacherib') for the seventeen years' reign of Sargon (722—705 B.C.). Sargon is mentioned in Isa. xx. 1.

Sennacherib] Called *Sin-aḥi-irib* (or *-irba*) in Assyrian, and *Sanacharibus* by Herodotus (II. 141). He succeeded his father Sargon (Isa. xx. 1) in 705 B.C., and reigned till 681, when he was succeeded by his son Esar-haddon (xix. 37). Palestine was the scene of only a small part of his military activity. In his first expedition (704 B.C.) he marched southward and drove Merodach-baladan out of Babylon. The second year he marched against Illip (south-east of Assyria), and received tribute from the Medes. His third expedition, in the course of which he brought Hezekiah to submission, was directed primarily against the Phœnician and Philistine cities situated on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean His fourth expedition, like his first, was to the South, against the Chaldeans who dwelt on the lower Euphrates. His fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth years were devoted to expeditions to the North, East, and South of Assyria; the West was left for a time in peace. Of the remaining years of Sennacherib no connected records remain.

against all the fenced cities...and took them] Sennacherib himself on the 'Prism Inscription' (preserved in the British Museum) writes: 'I besieged and took forty-six of his (i.e. Hezekiah's) strong cities, fortresses, and small cities within their borders without number... 200,150 persons, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen, and sheep without number I brought forth out of the midst of them, and numbered them as spoil. Himself I shut up like a caged bird in the midst of Jerusalem his royal city. His cities which I had spoiled I separated from his land and gave them to Mitinti king of Ashdod, Padi king of Ekron, and Sil-Bel king of Gaza, and I made

cities of Judah, and took them. And Hezekiah king of 14
Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have
offended, return from me: that which thou puttest on me
will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Heze-
kiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty
talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave *him* all the silver that 15
was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures
of the king's house. At that time did Hezekiah cut off *the* 16
gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from*
the [1]pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid,
and gave it to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria 17
sent [2]Tartan and [2]Rab-saris and [2]Rabshakeh from Lachish

[1] Or, *door posts* [2] The titles of Assyrian officers.

his land small. As for Hezekiah the fear of the glory of my lordship overcame him.... I caused [treasures]...together with 30 talents of gold and 800 talents of silver, to be sent after me to Nineveh, and he sent his ambassador to pay tribute and to do homage.' (At this point the account of a new campaign begins.)

14 *Lachish*] Cp. xiv. 19, note; also xix. 8, which implies that Lachish was captured by the king. A well-known relief preserved in the British Museum represents Sennacherib on his throne, and the spoils of Lachish being brought out of the city before him.

three hundred talents of silver] Sennacherib however in the 'Prism Inscription,' quoted above, claims to have taken or received 800 talents of silver. The additional 500 talents may have been taken from the forty-six Judaean cities captured by the Assyrians.

15. *in the house of the LORD*] Cp. xii. 18; xvi. 8; 1 K. xiv. 26; xv. 18; 1 Macc. i. 20—23; 2 Macc. ix. 2. Temples were used as treasuries by most of the nations of antiquity.

16. *cut off* the gold from *the doors*] The temple treasure itself was likely to be at a low ebb, for Hezekiah's predecessor had been obliged to send a special present to the king of Assyria.

17—37 (=Isa. xxxvi. 2—22; cp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 9—19). THE REPROACHES OF THE RABSHAKEH.

At this point a large portion of Kings (2 K. xviii. 17—xx. 21) is parallel with Isa. xxxvi. 2—xxxix. 8. It can hardly be doubted that the editor of the book of Isaiah borrowed the passage from Kings. Similarly the editor of the book of Jeremiah has reproduced 2 K. xxiv. 18—xxv. 21; 27—30 in Jer. lii. 1—27; 31—34.

17. *Tartan and Rab-saris and Rabshakeh*] These three words are not proper names, but the titles of Assyrian officers. The *tartan* (or *turtan*), mentioned also in Isa. xx. 1, was the military officer next after

to king Hezekiah with a great army unto Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper
18 pool, which is in the high way of the fuller's field. And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebnah the [1]scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the
19 [2]recorder. And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria,
20 What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Thou sayest,

[1] Or, *secretary* [2] Or, *chronicler*

the king, and might be called 'Commander-in-chief.' *Rab-saris* is supposed to represent the Assyrian *rab-sha-rishi*, 'chief of the heads (*or* princes)'; but it is not known what were the duties of this officer. *Rab-shakeh* may be 'chief of the *officers*' (Assyrian, *shak*), or, again, it may be 'chief of the cup-bearers.' The cup-bearer was an important officer because he had the ear of the king.

The suddenness with which the statement is made that the king of Assyria sent an army against Jerusalem is to be noted. *Vv.* 14—16 seem to say that Hezekiah made a full submission, and that this submission was accepted by Sennacherib; *v.* 17, without any warning, takes us into the midst of hostilities. Did a hitch occur in the negotiations? Our records do not say so. There is in any case a break in the record, due probably to the fact that the narrative is of composite authorship. See the Introductory Note to xviii. 13—xix. 37.

by the conduit] Vulg. *iuxta aquae ductum.* Cp. Isa. vii. 3. The place indicated cannot be identified with any certainty. The *fuller's field* and the *high way* named after it are unknown at present. The *upper pool*, if it still survives, may be the *Mamilla* on the west of Jerusalem, from which a conduit leads eastward into the heart of the present city.

18. *Eliakim...Shebnah*] These two men seem, according to Isa. xxii. 15—25, to have been rivals as chief ministers of Hezekiah. We may probably conclude from that passage that Shebnah favoured (cp. the mention of *chariots* in *v.* 18), and Eliakim opposed, an alliance with Egypt against Assyria.

over the household] Cp. 1 K. iv. 6, note.

scribe...recorder] Cp. 1 K. iv. 3, note.

19. *the great king, the king of Assyria*] Sennacherib's own description of himself on the 'Prism Inscription' runs, 'Sennacherib, the great king, the mighty king,...the king of Asshur, the king of the four quarters of the world, the wise shepherd, the favourite of the great gods,' &c.

but they are but [1]vain words, *There is* counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou hast rebelled against me? Now, behold, thou trustest upon the 21
staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him. But if 22
ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: is not that he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem? Now therefore, 23
I pray thee, [2]give pledges to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. How then canst 24
thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? Am I now come up without the LORD 25
against this place to destroy it? The LORD said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it. Then said Eliakim 26
the son of Hilkiah, and Shebnah, and Joah, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the [3]Syrian language;

[1] Heb. *a word of the lips* [2] Or, *make a wager with* [3] Heb. *Aramean*

21. *this bruised reed*] The prophet used similar language of Egypt. Cp. Isa. xxx. 1—7; xxxi. 1—3.

22. *whose high places and whose altars*] Cp. *v.* 4. Sennacherib was right as to the facts; the altars removed by Hezekiah were of course altars of JEHOVAH, but the worship offered at them was mixed with heathen elements.

23. *give pledges to*] Judah never had many horsemen, for the mountainous country round Jerusalem was ill-fitted for the movement of chariots. Cp. 1 K. i. 33; x. 26, with the notes. The Assyrian army on the other hand was well provided with chariots, which were brought as near to the city as the ground allowed. Cp. Isa. xxii. 7.

24. *captain*] Heb. *paḥath*. Cp. 1 K. x. 15, note.
for chariots and for horsemen] Cp. Isa. xxx. 16; xxxi. 1—3.

25. *The LORD said unto me, Go up*] The Assyrian king claims to punish Hezekiah for the removal of the high places of JEHOVAH. Cp. *v.* 22.

26. *Syrian*] Marg. *Aramean*, i.e. *Aramaic*. This Aramaic language, of which there are many dialects, was spoken widely in Western Asia, and no doubt the Assyrians learnt the language through their conquests in these regions. From Gen. xxxi. 47 it appears to have been the tongue used by Laban. Parts of Ezra (iv. 8—vi. 18) and Daniel (ii. 4—vii. 28) are written in Aramaic.

for we understand it: and speak not with us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall.
27 But Rabshakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? *hath he* not *sent me* to the men which sit on the wall, to eat their
28 own dung, and to drink their own water with you? Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear ye the word of the great
29 king, the king of Assyria. Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you; for he shall not be able to deliver
30 you out of his hand: neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of
31 Assyria. Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, [1]Make your peace with me, and come out to me; and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own
32 cistern; until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when
33 he persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations ever delivered his land out
34 of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods

[1] Heb. *Make with me a blessing*

28. *cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language*] The Assyrians, on the shewing of their own Annals, were never tender towards reigning dynasties. They were always ready to support a usurper who was willing to submit to them. Cp. in Israel the case of Pekah and Hoshea (xv. 30).

31. *Make your peace with me*] Lit., as marg., *Make with me a blessing*; LXX. ποιήσατε μετ' ἐμοῦ εὐλογίαν, i.e. acquire with my help a boon for yourselves; Vulg. *facite mecum quod uobis est utile.*

32. *a land of corn and wine*] Cp. the somewhat fuller description given in Deut. viii. 7—9. The description, except for the mention of honey, is that of an agricultural land; it is in contrast with Exod. iii. 8, 'a land flowing with milk and honey,' i.e. a pastoral country with wild honey dropping in the woods (1 Sam. xiv. 26). Palestine had districts of both types.

oil olive] Heb. *the olive of oil*, i.e. the olive which yields oil.

33. *Hath any of the gods...delivered*] Cp. Isa. x. 10, 11.

of Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivvah? have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among all the gods of the 35
countries, that have delivered their country out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand? But the people held their peace, and answered him not a 36
word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not. Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which 37
was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that 19
he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. And he sent Eliakim, 2
which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. And they said unto him, 3

34. *Hamath...Arpad*] Hamath, on the Orontes, called *Hamath the Great* in Amos vi. 2, and Arpad, north of the modern Aleppo, two important cities of Northern Syria, were conquered about 740 B.C. by Tiglath-pileser III.

Sepharvaim] Cp. xvii. 24, note.

Hena, and Ivvah] *Ivvah* might be read with other vowel points, *Avvah*, as in xvii. 24, but no satisfactory identification of the place has been proposed. Of *Hena* nothing whatever is known. With the enumeration of conquests given here cp. Isa. x. 9.

36. *the people held their peace*] LXX. ἐκώφευσαν, 'they (i.e. the three envoys) were dumb.'

37. *with their clothes rent*] As a sign that they had evil tidings to deliver. The king of Assyria instead of demanding tribute only, had demanded the unconditional surrender of the city.

CH. XIX. 1—8 (=Isa. xxxvii. 1—8). HEZEKIAH APPEALS TO ISAIAH.

The paragraph should be extended to include *v.* 8.

1. *and went into the house of the LORD*] This clause anticipates the incident recorded in *vv.* 14 ff.

2. *the elders of the priests*] Jer. xix. 1. They are otherwise called 'the chiefs of the priests' (2 Chr. xxxvi. 14).

Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz] This is the first mention of the great prophet in the book of Kings, yet his activity began many years before. We learn from the book of Isaiah that he received his call *in the year that king Uzziah died* (Isa. vi. 1); that he had an encounter

Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of
rebuke, and of contumely: for the children are come to
4 the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. It may
be the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh,
[1]whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach
the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD
thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the
5 remnant that is left. So the servants of king Hezekiah came
6 to Isaiah. And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to
your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the
words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the
7 king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will put
a spirit in him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return
to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword
in his own land.

[1] Or, *wherewith the king of Assyria...hath sent him*

with Ahaz during the Syro-Ephraimite crisis (Isa. vii. 1—17), and that one of his Assyrian prophecies was delivered *in the year that king Ahaz died* (Isa. xiv. 28). The editor of the book of Kings does not seem to have made any use of the book of Isaiah. Cp. further the INTRODUCTION, p. xxii, note.

3. *rebuke, and...contumely*] The words and the bearing of the rabshakeh had inflicted humiliation upon the Jews by bringing home to them a sense of their utter helplessness.

4. *to reproach the living God*] Cp. xviii. 32—35; 1 Sam. xvii. 26 (marg.).

rebuke the words] The words which had done so much harm are personified.

the remnant] According to Sennacherib 200,000 Jews had been carried captive besides those who had been slain (xviii. 13, note).

7. *I will put a spirit in him*] A Divine agent, a 'spirit' from the LORD, will take possession of Sennacherib, and lead him to perform the Divine will. We may compare the case of Saul, who, when about to arrest David (1 Sam. xix. 23, 24), was seized with what the Greeks would have called a Divine phrenzy (Πανικόν), and so was prevented from accomplishing his purpose.

a rumour] Rather, *a report*, Vulg. *nuncium*. This *report* relates probably to some trouble arising on the eastern or south-eastern frontier of Assyria, e.g. to some movement of the king of Elam and of his allies the Chaldeans, against whom Sennacherib made an expedition in the following year (700 B.C.). There is no reference to the report of Tirhakah's advance (*v.* 9). The Egyptian was a contemptible foe (Isa. xxx. 3—7).

So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish. And when he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee: he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by [1]destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered? Have the gods of the

[1] Heb. *devoting them*

8. *So Rabshakeh returned*] Rather, **And the rabshakeh returned.** Nothing is said of the return of the *tartan* and the great army (xviii. 17). Probably the blockade of Jerusalem was maintained, until Hezekiah submitted (xviii. 14 ff.).

Libnah] Cp. viii. 22, note.

Lachish] Cp. xviii. 14; also xiv. 19, note.

9—19 (=Isa. xxxvii. 9—20). SENNACHERIB'S LETTER AND HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER.

Vv. 9—35 are taken from an account of a later expedition of Sennacherib. See Introductory Note to xviii. 13—xix. 37.

9. *Tirhakah king of Ethiopia*] It is clear that the monarch thus described is to be identified with the Ethiopian prince Taharqa who reigned over Egypt and Ethiopia, 693—667 B.C. A stele records that he was sent northward from the Ethiopian court at Napata (*Gebel Barkal*) into Lower Egypt at the age of twenty before he became 'king.' Combining therefore this fact with the title given him in this verse, we must conjecture (if we refer the whole account given in xviii. 13—xix. 37 to the fourteenth year of Hezekiah) that Tirhakah was acting as viceroy in Lower Egypt in 701, the date of Sennacherib's expedition, and that he was expected to march against the Assyrians. Cp. Flinders Petrie, *Egypt*, vol. III. 296. It is better however to refer this verse and those that follow to a later expedition of Sennacherib, perhaps in 689 B.C., or later.

he sent messengers] His object of course was to destroy any reviving hope which the news concerning Tirhakah might give Hezekiah.

11. *destroying them utterly*] The Heb. word is the same as in Josh. vi. 17, 18, 21, *al.* Sennacherib himself writes, 'Their cities I destroyed, laid waste, burnt with fire. The city of Tilgarimmu I conquered and turned its site into plough land' (*K.I.B.* II. 118).

nations delivered them, which my fathers have destroyed,
Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden
13 which were in Telassar? Where is the king of Hamath,
and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sephar-
14 vaim, of Hena, and Ivvah? And Hezekiah received the
letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and
Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread
15 it before the LORD. And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD,
and said, O LORD, the God of Israel, that [1]sittest upon the
cherubim, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the
kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.
16 Incline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes,
O LORD, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib,
wherewith he hath sent him to reproach the living God.
17 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the
18 nations and their lands, and have cast their gods into the
fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands,

[1] Or, *dwellest between*

12. *Gozan*] Cp. xvii. 6, note.

Haran] A city south-east of Edessa (Urfa), the home for a time of Abraham (Gen. xi. 31; xii. 4).

Rezeph] A city called *Raṣappa*, south of the Euphrates, north-east of Tadmor.

Eden] A district west of Gozan, extending eastward and westward from the Euphrates, called *Bit-Adini* by the Assyrians.

Telassar] Unknown.

13. *Where is the king of Hamath*] Cp. xviii. 34, notes.

14. *Hezekiah went up*] Though Hezekiah alone is mentioned, it is probable that the heads of the people accompanied him. The circumstances demanded that the appeal to the God of Israel should be made in public.

spread it] Held it in his outspread hand. Cp. 1 K. viii. 22, note. The letter was probably a small clay tablet.

15. *sittest upon the cherubim*] Cp. Exod. xxv. 22. The reference is to the ark.

thou art the God, even thou alone] Cp. 1 K. viii. 23, 60; xviii. 39.

thou hast made heaven and earth] In the books of Samuel and Kings JEHOVAH is usually spoken of as the God of Israel; his wider relation to the whole world is left in the background. Cp. especially 1 K. xviii. 36, 'Thou art God in Israel.' It cannot be doubted that the conception of the nature of God deepened and widened in Israel between the time of Elijah and Isaiah.

16. *to reproach the living God*] Cp. *v.* 4, note.

18. *have cast their gods into the fire*] This would happen only

wood and stone; therefore they have destroyed them. Now 19
therefore, O LORD our God, save thou us, I beseech thee,
out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may
know [1]that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.

Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, 20
Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Whereas thou hast
prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have
heard *thee*. This is the word that the LORD hath spoken 21
concerning him: The virgin daughter of Zion hath despised
thee and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem
hath shaken her head [2]at thee. Whom hast thou reproached 22
and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy
voice and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against the
Holy One of Israel. By thy messengers thou hast re- 23
proached the Lord, and hast said, With the [3]multitude of
my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains,

[1] Or, *that thou, O LORD, art God* [2] Heb. *after*
[3] According to another reading, *driving*

incidentally through the burning of a city. The Assyrian practice was rather to carry off the gods of their enemies, who sometimes made submission in order to recover their gods. Esar-haddon inscribed 'the might of Asshur' on the gods of Iadi, and then returned them to the king of Iadi. Cp. *K.I.B.* II. 130—2. Sennacherib's soldiery, however, on one occasion broke the gods of Babylon in pieces (*K.I.B.* II. 118).

20—28 (=Isa. xxxvii. 21—29). ISAIAH'S MESSAGE; FIRST PART.

The burden of this first part is that the Assyrian king has reached the limit of his great successes. He will not advance further, for the LORD will turn him back.

21. *at thee*] Better as marg., **after thee.** Sennacherib is spoken of as in retreat.

22. *the Holy One of Israel*] This title is found here only in Kings, but it is a characteristic phrase of Isaiah. Cp. Isa. i. 4; v. 19, 24; x. 20. Before the time of Isaiah the word *holy* seems to have been commonly used in the sense of mere aloofness from human kind. Cp. Dan. ii. 11. Isaiah (v. 16) however gives it the more spiritual meaning.

23. *With the multitude of my chariots*] So the *Kĕrī*, LXX. Vulg. Targ. Marg. as the *Kĕthīb*.

am I come up] Similar boasts are found on the Inscriptions of several Assyrian kings. Thus Sennacherib himself says, 'In places too steep for my litter, I alighted on my feet; like a wild goat I climbed

to the innermost parts of Lebanon; and I will cut down
the tall cedars thereof, and the choice [1]fir trees thereof:
and I will enter into his farthest lodging place, the forest of
24 his fruitful field. I have digged and drunk strange waters,
and with the sole of my feet will I dry up all the rivers of
25 [2]Egypt. Hast thou not heard how I have done it long ago,
and formed it of ancient times? now have I brought it to
pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities into
26 ruinous heaps. Therefore their inhabitants were of small
power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were as
the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass
on the housetops, and as corn blasted before it be grown
27 up. But I know thy sitting down, and thy going out, and

[1] Or, *cypress* [2] Or, *defence* Heb. *Mazor*

the steep summits; where my knees rested, I sat down upon the rock, and drank the cold water of the mountain-springs to quench my thirst' (*K.I.B.* II. 98).

the tall cedars] Cp. Isa. xiv. 8, which though written of a king of Babylon, applies equally well to several Assyrian kings.

fir] Cp. 1 K. vi. 15; Ezek. xxvii. 5.

24. *all the rivers of Egypt*] The Heb. word used here for *river* is *yĕōr*, a word used almost exclusively for the Nile and (in the plural) for its branches. *Egypt* is represented not by the usual *Mizraim*, but by *Māzōr* as in Isa. xix. 6. The marg. reading, *rivers of defence*, LXX. ποταμοὺς περιοχῆς, though wrong as a translation, is right in suggesting that the branches of the Nile are the main defence of Egypt. The first Assyrian king to accomplish this threat was Sennacherib's successor Esar-haddon.

25. *Hast thou not heard*] With these words the LORD'S answer to the Assyrian begins. Sennacherib does not know that he is only an instrument in JEHOVAH'S hand, chosen long ago to fulfil the Divine will, and no more. Cp. Isa. x. 5—7; 13—15.

fenced cities into ruinous heaps] Cp. Tiglath-pileser's words, 'Their cities I destroyed, laid waste, burnt with fire, I changed them into heaps and plough-land' (*K.I.B.* II. 16).

26. *before it be grown up*] The Heb. text seems to need emendation. For the words *before it be grown up* we should perhaps read *Before me is thy rising up*, and the clause should be read with the following verse. See the next note.

27. *But I know &c.*] Taking in the last words of the preceding verse we should translate as follows: *Before me is thy rising up and thy sitting down, and thy going out and thy coming in I know*, yea, *and thy raging against me*. The order and idiom of the Hebrew marks out the last five words for emphasis.

thy coming in, and thy raging against me. Because of thy 28
raging against me, and for that [1]thine arrogancy is come up
into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose,
and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the
way by which thou camest. And this shall be the sign unto 29
thee: ye shall eat this year that which groweth of itself,
and in the second year that which springeth of the same;
and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vine-
yards, and eat the fruit thereof. And [2]the remnant that is 30
escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root down-
ward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall 31
go forth a remnant, and out of mount Zion they that shall
escape: the zeal of [3]the LORD shall perform this. There- 32

[1] Or, *thy careless ease* [2] Heb. *the escaped of the house of Judah that remain* [3] According to another reading, *the LORD of hosts* and so in Is. xxxvii. 32

28. *thine arrogancy*] The word connotes confidence in the continuance of prosperity. Cp. Isa. xxxii. 9, 11 ('that are at ease').

my hook...and my bridle] This phrase has reference to an Assyrian custom which is shewn on several ancient reliefs. Esar-haddon is represented holding Tirhakah of Ethiopia prisoner by a ring passed through his cheeks; another Assyrian monarch holds a prisoner by a hook and a cord, while putting out his eyes. Cp. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11 (marg.).

29—31 (Isa. xxxvii. 30—32). ISAIAH'S MESSAGE; SECOND PART.

The burden of this second part is that a remnant of the Jewish people will survive the ravages of the Assyrian king. The opposite result was rather to be expected, namely, that the Jews, like the Northern Israelites, would become absorbed in the heathen round them.

29. *this shall be the sign unto thee*] Sennacherib retreated, and Jerusalem was saved at least a twelvemonth before this sign was realised. It belongs therefore to the class of 'retrospective' signs. The first harvest after Sennacherib's retreat was to be a reminder to the Jews that God had delivered them from the Assyrians. For other 'retrospective' signs see Gen. ix. 13; Exod. iii. 12.

30. *shall again take root*] The population was uprooted, when it was forced to take refuge from all the country round in Jerusalem for fear of the invaders. The kingdom of Judah lasted for a century after the invasion of Sennacherib.

31. *the zeal of the LORD shall perform this*] This is the reading of the *Kĕthīb*; the *Kĕrī* has *the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall perform this*, in agreement with Isa. xxxvii. 32. Cp. also Isa. ix. 7.

fore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria,
He shall not come unto this city, nor shoot an arrow there,
neither shall he come before it with shield, nor cast a mount
33 against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he
return, and he shall not come unto this city, saith the LORD.
34 For I will defend this city to save it, for mine own sake,
and for my servant David's sake.
35 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the
LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians
an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when men
arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead

32—34 (=Isa. xxxvii. 33—35). ISAIAH'S MESSAGE; THIRD PART.

The burden of this third part is that Jerusalem is to remain inviolate; the king of Assyria will return home without appearing before it.

32. *shoot an arrow...come before it with shield*] The Assyrian method of attacking a fortified city included the planting of huge shields or screens from behind which showers of arrows were poured against the defenders on the battlements. This practice is represented on many of the Assyrian reliefs.

a mount] A causeway of earth raised against the wall of a besieged city to enable the besiegers to attack the defenders on the same level. Cp. 2 Sam. xx. 15; Hab. i. 10; 1 Macc. vi. 51. Battering rams were often placed on the mount. Cp. Ezek. iv. 2; xxvi. 8, 9. The *mount* is the Latin *agger*.

33. *By the way that he came*] In his advance Sennacherib followed the coast road, which passes through the territory of the Philistines and does not approach within twenty miles of Jerusalem.

34. *for my servant David's sake*] Cp. 1 K. xi. 13.

35 (=Isa. xxxvii. 36; cp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 21). DEATH IN THE CAMP OF THE ASSYRIANS.

This verse forms the sequel to the account given in *vv.* 9—34, and so refers to the second occasion on which Jerusalem was threatened by Sennacherib. God sent a plague (cp. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16) into the Assyrian camp, and 185,000 men were fatally stricken in a single night. There is no trace of such a disaster in the Assyrian or Babylonian records which are at present known, but a passage of Herodotus (II. 141) seems to preserve a distorted reminiscence of the event. The Greek historian relates on Egyptian authority that 'Sanacharibus king of the Arabians and Assyrians' (*sic*) made an expedition against Egypt in the reign of a king whom Herodotus calls Sethon the priest of Hephaestus. The Egyptian king was deserted by the military caste and reduced to great straits, but Hephaestus sent field mice into the

corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and 36
went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came 37
to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his
god, that [1]Adrammelech and Sharezer smote him with the

[1] According to another reading, *Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons* and so in Is. xxxvii. 38

camp of the enemy, whose quivers and bows and shield-handles were devoured. Egypt was thus delivered. It has been said that the mouse was a symbol of the plague, and that the story is a symbolical form of that recorded in this verse. All that we are entitled however to say is that the Egyptians had a tradition of an unsuccessful expedition of Sennacherib king of Assyria against Egypt. Neither the Biblical nor the Egyptian account expressly mentions a plague. On the other hand, that a plague broke out in Sennacherib's army is no unlikely event, for on the frontier of Egypt, about the eastern mouths of the Nile, the bubonic plague was almost endemic.

36, 37 (= Isa. xxxvii. 37, 38). ISAIAH'S PREDICTION ACCOMPLISHED.

It seems that *v.* 36 forms a sequel to *v.* 7 *a*, and *v.* 37 to *v.* 7 *b*.

36. *So Sennacherib*] Rather, **And Sennacherib.**

departed, and went] Rather, **took his journey and departed.** The first verb connotes the breaking up of a camp; it is translated 'journeyed' in Num. xxi. 10—13, where the movements of the camp of Israel in the Wilderness are described.

and dwelt at Nineveh] The Heb. historian seems to say that Sennacherib after his return from threatening Jerusalem remained inactive at Nineveh until his assassination (*v.* 37). Thus the reference cannot be to his return from the West in 701 B.C., for he is known to have been engaged away from his capital in various campaigns down to 689 B.C., when he captured Babylon. Probably Sennacherib 'dwelt in Nineveh' after his return from a campaign in the West which took place later than 689 B.C.

37. *in the house of Nisroch his god*] No god called *Nisroch* is known, and at present no light can be thrown on the meaning of the word from Assyrian sources. The only record of the death of Sennacherib given on the monuments is in the Babylonian Chronicle, which briefly records, 'On the 20th day of the month Tebet Sennacherib king of Assyria was slain by his son in an insurrection.' Some Assyriologists however citing a difficult passage in the annals of Asshur-bani-pal (*K.A.T.*, 85; *K.I.B.*, 192–3) suggest that Sennacherib was murdered at Babylon. If this be so, *Nisroch* is probably a distorted form of *Marduk* (Merodach). The year was probably 682 B.C.

Adrammelech and Sharezer] In Isaiah *Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons*. The same reading is given here by the *Kĕrī*, LXX. Vulg. Targ. Peshitta. It is however possible that the shorter reading is right. The Babylonian Chronicle (quoted in the last note) mentions one son

sword: and they escaped into the land of Ararat And Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.

20 In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for 2 thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to 3 the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that 4 which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And

only as the murderer. The name of the (one) murderer is given by Abydenus as *Adramelus*, which may be for *Adrammelech*. Of *Sharezer* no probable account can be given.

Ararat] Called by the Assyrians *Urartu*; it was part of the land of Armenia. Its kings intervened in the affairs of Northern Syria in opposition to the Assyrians. The murderers of Sennacherib would naturally expect a welcome in Armenia.

Esar-hadaon] According to the Babylonian Chronicle the accession of this king did not take place until nearly a year after his father's death. The insurgents maintained themselves for a time, and, if a broken inscription of Esar-haddon has been correctly interpreted, they put an army in the field against him. *Esar-haddon*, in Assyrian *Asshur-ah-iddina* (i.e. 'Asshur gives a brother') a name suitable for a second son, reigned 681—668 B.C. He led several expeditions against Egypt, and in one of his inscriptions (*K.I.B.* II. 148) reckons Manasseh king of Judah among the twelve kings of the Mediterranean coastlands who were subject to him.

CH. XX. **1—11** (=Isa. xxxviii. 1—8, 21, 22). THE SICKNESS OF HEZEKIAH.

The account in Isaiah is supplemented by the inclusion of 'the writing of Hezekiah,' a psalm commemorating the king's recovery from sickness (Isa. xxxviii. 9—20).

1. *In those days*] i.e. soon after Sennacherib's invasion in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah (xviii. 13). Hezekiah reigned altogether *twenty-nine* years, and since in *v.* 6 *fifteen* years are promised him, it is plain that he had been fourteen years on the throne, when he fell sick.

Set thine house in order] Lit. *give directions to thine household*; LXX. ἔντειλαι τῷ οἴκῳ σου.

2. *he turned his face*] Cp. 1 K. xxi. 4.

3. *in truth*] Hezekiah claims that he has been faithful to JEHOVAH, and free from idolatry. Cp. xviii. 3—6. He does not claim moral perfection.

it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone [1]out into [2]the middle
part of the city, that the word of the LORD came to him,
saying, Turn again, and say to Hezekiah the [3]prince of my 5
people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father,
I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold,
I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto
the house of the LORD. And I will add unto thy days 6
fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of
the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this
city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.
And Isaiah said, Take a cake of figs. And they took and 7
laid it on the boil, and he recovered. And Hezekiah said 8
unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal

[1] Or, *out of* [2] According to another reading, *the middle court*
[3] Or, *leader*

4. *into the middle part of the city*] This is the reading of the *Kĕthīb*. The *Ḳĕrī* however together with LXX. Vulg. Targ. Peshitta reads *middle court*, by which the *other court* (1 K. vii. 8), in which the palace was situated, seems to be meant. In the Hebrew (both *Kĕthīb* and *Ḳĕrī*) no preposition is found, so that it is not certain whether the meaning is *into the middle court* (marg.) or *from the middle court*.

5. *the prince*] Cp. 1 K. i. 35, note.

I will heal thee: on the third day] Hezekiah's recovery is gradual, but it is none the less the work of JEHOVAH.

6. *thee and this city*] This promise corresponds with the facts as we know them. Judah was not freed from the necessity of paying tribute to Assyria by the withdrawal of Sennacherib, but Jerusalem itself was saved, and Hezekiah was not carried off.

7. *a cake of figs*] Such plaisters were used in classical times. Cp. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* XXIII. 63, 'figs stewed in wine and laid on as a plaister cure boils.'

the boil] Heb. *shĕḥīn*, which might mean the boil or bubo of the plague, or it might be equivalent to *shn*, a name applied by the Egyptians to a very severe form of dysentery which causes the abdomen to swell. Cp. A. Macalister, MEDICINE, in Hastings' *Dictionary*, III. 325.

8. *And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah*] The question was no doubt put *before* the recovery mentioned in the preceding verse. The story of the sign is told more briefly in the parallel passage of Isaiah. In both accounts the shadow *returns* ten 'steps' or 'degrees.' It is to be noted, however, that in Kings it is the *shadow*, not the sun itself, which *returns*, whereas in Isa. xxxviii. 8 it is said that *the sun returned*. This difference is important. Such a wonder affecting a particular sun-dial might serve simply as a sign to the owner of the dial, but

me, and that I shall go up unto the house of the LORD the
9 third day? And Isaiah said, This shall be the sign unto
thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that
he hath spoken: [1]shall the shadow go forward ten [2]steps,
10 or go back ten steps? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light
thing for the shadow to decline ten steps: nay, but let the
11 shadow return backward ten steps. And Isaiah the prophet
cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten
steps backward, by which it had gone down on the [3]dial
of Ahaz.

12 At that time [4]Berodach-baladan the son of Baladan,
king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah:
13 for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. And Heze-

[1] Or, *the shadow is gone forward ten steps, shall it go back &c.*
[2] Or, *degrees* [3] Heb. *steps* [4] In Is. xxxix. 1, *Merodach-baladan*

affecting the sun itself it would have affected and perhaps destroyed our whole Universe. In 2 Chr. xxxii. 31 the sign is spoken of as 'the wonder which was done in the land'; i.e. it is treated as a *local* marvel.

9. *shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps?*] This rendering agrees with LXX. Vulg. Targ. Peshitta. The marg., however, gives the real sense of the Hebrew, **the shadow is gone forward ten steps, shall it go back ten steps?** The prophet asks, 'Shall the shadow return the whole circuit it has traversed to-day?'

11. *the dial of Ahaz*] Ahaz was interested in foreign things, and perhaps introduced this dial from some other country. Cp. xvi. 10 ff.

12—19 (=Isa. xxxix. 1—8; cp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 31). THE AMBASSADORS FROM BABYLON.

12. *Berodach-baladan*] His name is more correctly given in Isa. xxxix. 1 as *Merodach-baladan*. He is called *Marduk-apil-iddina* ('Marduk gives a son')[1] on the inscriptions of Sargon and Sennacherib, with both of whom he came into conflict. Sennacherib declares that in the first year of his reign he utterly defeated Merodach-baladan and captured Babylon, and that in his fourth expedition in the year after his invasion of Judah, he forced Merodach-baladan to take refuge on an island in the sea, presumably near the mouths of the Euphrates. The embassy to Hezekiah was probably only one out of several sent to the kings of Syria to stir them up against Assyria. At the time of his embassy Merodach-baladan was no longer king of Babylon *de facto*.

for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick] Enquiry accompanied

[1] Another form of the name is *Marduk-abal-iddin*.

kiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his [1]precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious oil, and [2]the house of his [3]armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon. And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them. And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD. Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the

14 15 16 17

[1] Or, *spicery* [2] Another reading is, *all the house* [3] Or, *jewels*

by a present was an ancient form of courtesy between allied kings. In the Tell-el-Amarna correspondence *circ.* 1400 B.C. the Babylonian king complains that the king of Egypt has not enquired after him in his sickness.

13. *hearkened unto them*] So Targ. But the text is probably corrupt. LXX. ἐχάρη ἐπ' αὐτοῖς, Vulg. *laetatus est in aduentu eorum.* These renderings agree with the reading of Isa. xxxix. 2, *was glad of them.*

the house of his precious things] Assyriologists say that the Heb. *bēth-nĕkhōth* is borrowed from the Babylonian *bīt-nakamti*, 'treasure-house.'

the house of his armour] Another reading prefixes the word *all.* Perhaps it was *the house of the forest of Lebanon.* Cp. 1 K. vii. 2.

treasures] The Heb. word is usually translated *treasuries* in the Revised Version.

14. *What said these men?*] Isaiah suspected that a proposal of alliance had been made, and, since Hezekiah does not answer the question, the suspicion was no doubt justified. The prophet held that foreign alliances should be avoided; cp. his denunciations of any connexion with Egypt (Isa. xxx. 1—7; xxxi. 1—3).

17. *shall be carried to Babylon*] It is often supposed that *vv.* 17, 18 refer to the great captivity of Judah which was carried out by Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, in the years 597 and 586 B.C. The chief support for this supposition lies in the mention of *Babylon* as the place of captivity. Babylon, however, was in the hands of the Assyrians intermittently during the reigns of Sennacherib, Esar-haddon, and

18 LORD. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be
19 eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, Is it not so, if peace
20 and truth shall be in my days? Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made the pool, and the conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
21 Judah? And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

21 Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign;

Asshur-bani-pal; and Esar-haddon styles himself *shakkanak Babilu*, 'governor of Babylon.' Thus a Hebrew writer might reasonably call a king of Assyria by the title of *king of Babylon*. But chiefly it should be noticed that the punishment described here affects the king's house only; it is by no means co-extensive with the Babylonian captivity. Two things are to happen: *first*, the royal treasures will be carried off, *secondly*, 'some' of the king's sons will be taken away to become eunuchs in the conqueror's palace. Nothing is said regarding the temple treasures, nothing is said with regard to captives other than the king's sons. It is more reasonable therefore to suppose that the event here alluded to is the carrying off of Manasseh to Babylon by the Assyrians recorded in 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. If the king was taken captive, he would hardly be taken without some other members of the royal house, and a heavy fine was invariably exacted under such circumstances by the Assyrians. It is more natural to suppose that the reference is to a near event like this, than to so distant a calamity as the Babylonian captivity.

19. *Good is the word*] An expression of resignation. The postponement of punishment is a sign of mercy, and Hezekiah accepts it as such. Cp. 1 K. xxi. 29.

20, 21 (=2 Chr. xxxii. 32, 33; cp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 3, 4). THE SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF HEZEKIAH.

20. *all his might*] Cp. xviii. 8.

the pool] The *pool* meant is perhaps '*Ain Silwan*, 'the pool of Siloam'; and the *conduit* the rock-hewn tunnel which leads to it from the Virgin's Pool. Cp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 30; Ecclus xlviii. 17.

CH. XXI. 1—18. MANASSEH KING OF JUDAH.

This section is one more illustration of the fact that Kings is not a book of annals, but rather a collection of prophetical comments on Hebrew history. No narrative is given of the events of the reign of

and he reigned five and fifty years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Hephzi-bah. And he did that which 2
was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. For he built again the high places which Hezekiah 3
his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal,

Manasseh. In *vv.* 1, 2, 17, 18 the usual brief summary of merely formal details appears, and the verdict is passed that this king 'did that which was evil.' What remains (*vv.* 3—16) is an indictment of Manasseh, part of which (*vv.* 10—15) is directly ascribed to 'the prophets,' while the rest is written as a prophet imbued with the spirit of Deuteronomy might have written it. The only 'acts' of Manasseh which are recorded are (1) that he restored the high places, *v.* 3; (2) that he built altars for the 'Host of Heaven' in the Temple courts, *v.* 5; (3) that he put an image of the goddess Asherah into the Temple, *v.* 7. We may perhaps add (4) that he shed 'very much' innocent blood, *v.* 16. On the other hand, nothing is said of his relations with the king of Assyria, though according to the Assyrian inscriptions Manasseh (together with other kings of the West) was summoned into Esar-haddon's presence, and commanded to furnish building materials for his new palace, and though Manasseh was one of the twenty-two kings of the Mediterranean shore who brought valuable gifts to Asshur-bani-pal on his first expedition against Egypt. The section, exclusive of *vv.* 1, 2, 17, 18, seems to belong to a time when the Babylonian exile had already begun (see *v.* 8, note), and the political details of Manasseh's reign had lost their interest.

1—9 (= 2 Chr. xxxiii. 1—9). **THE APOSTASY OF MANASSEH.**

1. *Hephzi-bah*] The meaning of the name is 'She in whom is my delight.' It is used as a symbolical name of Zion in Isa. lxii. 4.

2. *after the abominations of the heathen*] The same thing is said of his grandfather Ahaz (xvi. 3).

3. *he built again the high places*] This rebuilding would consist of restoring the altar, setting up again the images of the gods, and re-erecting the monoliths (*maççēbōth*). As a high place was simply a levelled space in the open air, there was no building in the usual sense of the word to be done. Cp. 1 K. xi. 7, note.

which Hezekiah his father had destroyed] Cp. xviii. 4. Manasseh returned to the religious practices of his grandfather Ahaz, partly because he, like his grandfather, was closely dependent on Assyria (cp. xix. 37, note on *Esar-haddon*). Probably Isaiah was not alive when Manasseh reversed Hezekiah's religious policy. The tradition found in the Talmud and in the *Ascension of Isaiah* (an apocryphal work of the First Century of our era) that the prophet was sawn

and made an Asherah, as did Ahab king of Israel, and
4 worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. And
he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD
5 said, In Jerusalem will I put my name. And he built altars
for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of
6 the LORD. And he made his son to pass through the fire,
and practised augury, and used enchantments, and [1]dealt
with them that had familiar spirits, and with wizards: he
wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him
7 to anger. And he set the graven image of Asherah, that he
had made, in the house of which the LORD said to David
and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem,
which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, will I
8 put my name for ever: neither will I cause the feet of Israel
to wander any more out of the land which I gave their

[1] Or, *appointed* Heb. *made*

asunder by Manasseh, though ancient, is improbable. Nothing is said of this martyrdom either in Kings (though *vv.* 10—16 give an opportunity for mentioning it, if it took place), or in Chronicles, or again in Ecclus xlviii. 22—25.

reared up altars for Baal, and made an Asherah] Cp. 1 K. xvi. 32, 33, note. For *Asherah* see 1 K. xiv. 23, note.

all the host of heaven] Cp. xvii. 16, note. This worship was apparently new in Judah. Manasseh in this shewed himself more fully under Assyrian influence than Ahaz.

4. *In Jerusalem will I put my name*] 1 K. viii. 29; ix. 3. Cp. Deut. xii. 11.

5. *the two courts*] Cp. 1 K. vi. 36, note.

6. *he made his son to pass*] LXX. *his sons*, a reading which agrees better with the frequentative form of the verb used here. What he did, he did more than once. Cp. xvi. 3, note.

practised augury] What particular form of augury is here referred to, is unknown.

used enchantments] Cp. xvii. 17, note.

dealt with them that had familiar spirits] Better as marg., **appointed them that had familiar spirits.** He attached such persons to his court, to consult in case of need. Cp. 1 Sam. xxviii. 3—25.

and with wizards] Rather, **and wizards.** Cp. Isa. viii. 19.

7. *Asherah*] Here no doubt the name of a goddess. Cp. xvii. 16; 1 K. xv. 13, marg.

In this house] Cp. *v.* 4, note.

8. *to wander any more out of the land*] Israel might be said to have 'wandered' out of Canaan into Egypt in Jacob's days through stress of

fathers; if only they will observe to do according to all that
I have commanded them, and according to all the law that
my servant Moses commanded them. But they hearkened 9
not: and Manasseh seduced them to do that which is evil
more than did the nations, whom the LORD destroyed before
the children of Israel. And the LORD spake by his servants 10
the prophets, saying, Because Manasseh king of Judah hath 11
done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all
that the Amorites did, which were before him, and hath
made Judah also to sin with his idols: therefore thus saith 12
the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I bring such evil upon
Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his
ears shall tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line 13
of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and I
will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and
turning it upside down. And I will cast off the remnant of 14
mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their

famine, but the language is more suitable, if the Babylonian captivity be referred to. The phrase involves an anachronism.

10—16 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 10). JUDGEMENT PRONOUNCED THROUGH THE PROPHETS UPON MANASSEH.

10. *the prophets*] Cp. Jer. xv. 1—4, where pestilence and sword and famine and captivity are denounced against Judah 'because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem.'

11. *the Amorites*] Cp. 1 K. xxi. 26, note.

12. *both his ears shall tingle*] Cp. 1 Sam. iii. 11; Jer. xix. 3.

13. *the line...the plummet*] Both these are implements of building (cp. Zech. i. 16), not of pulling down: it is the epithet attached to each which shews that destruction is meant. It would seem that the people were deluding themselves with hopes of reviving prosperity and of expansion. They looked for the line and the plummet to be used for the enlargement or at least for the restoration of their city. The prophetic message answers their expectations with bitter irony: 'Your building line will prove to be *the line of Samaria*, and your plummet *the plummet of the house of Ahab*.' Both Samaria and the house of Ahab had been destroyed.

14. *I will cast off the remnant*] Hitherto the announcement of impending judgement had been tempered with mercy, and a promise had been added that though the nation should be punished, the 'remnant' should escape and flourish again. Cp. xix. 30, 31.

enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all
15 their enemies; because they have done that which is evil in
my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day
their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day.
16 Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he
had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his
sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which
17 was evil in the sight of the LORD. Now the rest of the acts
of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned,
are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the
18 kings of Judah? And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and
was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of
Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.
19 Amon was twenty and two years old when he began to

16. *innocent blood*] A reference to acts of oppression. The sacrifice of children by fire has already been mentioned (*v.* 6).
made Judah to sin] i.e. drove them to apostasy from JEHOVAH.

17, 18 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11—20). THE SUMMARY OF MANASSEH'S REIGN.

The author of Chronicles is silent as to the judgement pronounced on Manasseh in *vv.* 11—16, but he records a punishment which fell upon the king in his lifetime, and also the king's repentance. 'The captains of the host of the king of Assyria' took Manasseh 'with hooks' and carried him off 'to Babylon.' Upon this he repented, was restored to Jerusalem, and, reversing his old religious policy, commanded Judah to serve JEHOVAH. This story has been doubted but on insufficient grounds. The mention of Babylon in 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11 as the place of Manasseh's captivity raises no serious difficulty (cp. xx. 17, note), nor can any stress be laid on the silence of Kings, for there nothing whatever is said of the political events of the fifty-five years of this king's reign. Nor again does the fact that the compiler of Kings condemns Manasseh without qualification offer an insuperable difficulty. Manasseh's captivity and repentance may have occurred late in his reign, too late indeed to do anything towards staying the impending ruin. In this case the compiler of Kings is fully justified in describing his reign simply as evil.

18. *in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza*] *Uzza* may be another form of *Uzziah* or *Azariah*. Cp. xv. 1, note.

19—26 (=2 Chr. xxxiii. 21—25). THE REIGN OF AMON.

19. *Amon*] It is noteworthy that the names by which the kings of Judah who were faithful to JEHOVAH are known in the book of Kings, have the termination *-iah*, which is a shortened form of JEHOVAH; thus

reign; and he reigned two years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the 20
LORD, as did Manasseh his father. And he walked in all 21
the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them: and he forsook the 22
LORD, the God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD. And the servants of Amon conspired against 23
him, and put the king to death in his own house. But the 24
people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead. Now the rest of the acts of Amon 25
which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And he was buried in 26
his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; and 22
he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. And he did that which was right in the eyes of 2

Uzziah, Hezekiah, Josiah. Similarly in the name *Jotham* it is probable that the first syllable represents the name JEHOVAH. On the other hand the unfaithful kings bear the names *Ahaz*, *Manasseh*, and *Amon*, from which any element derived from the name of Israel's God is absent. These three names have a 'secular' sound, when they are compared with the other four.

Jotbah] This may be the place mentioned in Num. xxxiii. 33, 34; Deut. x. 7 (Heb. text) as one of the halting-places of Israel during the desert wanderings. It was 'a land of brooks of water.' It might at one time be reckoned to Judah (as in the *Onomasticon*), and at another to the desert, for there was no well-defined frontier to Judah on the south.

23. *the servants of Amon*] Cp. xii. 20.
24. *the people of the land*] Cp. xiv. 21.
26. *in the garden of Uzza*] Cp. *v.* 18, note.

CH. XXII. **1, 2** (= 2 Chr. xxxiv. 1, 2). THE ACCESSION OF JOSIAH.

1. *Jedidah*] Meaning, 'Beloved.' Cp. 2 Sam. xii. 25 with margin.
Bozkath] Mentioned in Josh. xv. 39 in connexion with Lachish. It was in the south-west of Judah.

the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

3 And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD,

4 saying, Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum

2. *turned not aside to the right hand or to the left*] Cp. Deut. v. 32 [29 Heb.]; xvii. 11, 20; xxviii. 14. No commendation so strong as this is given in the book of Kings to any Jewish king except Hezekiah. Cp. xviii. 5, 6.

3—20 (= 2 Chr. xxxiv. 8—28). REPAIR OF THE TEMPLE. DISCOVERY OF THE BOOK OF THE LAW.

The Chronicler puts the account of the cleansing of the land from idolatry (2 Chr. xxxiv. 3—7 = 2 K. xxiii. 4—20) *before* the account of the repair of the Temple and the discovery of the book of the Law. It is, however, more probable that the discovery of the book preceded the vigorous measures taken against idolatry. It may be doubted whether it would have been possible to destroy cherished symbols and to defile high places which had been venerated for centuries, unless an impetus had been given to reforming zeal by the publication of the contents of the book of the Law of Moses.

3. *in the eighteenth year*] The story of the restoration of the Temple begins abruptly, probably because the compiler of Kings omitted the beginning of the document which lay before him. The direction given to Hilkiah in *v.* 4 is to 'sum' the money, i.e. to make up the account of a collection which had been made. This order implies a previous order that money should be collected for the repair of the Temple. We may conclude that Josiah's first step was to make some such arrangements for raising the necessary sum, as Joash had made before him. Cp. xii. 7—9. This collection may have been started some time before the eighteenth year of Josiah, for Judah had been drained of its resources under Hezekiah and Manasseh to pay the tribute imposed by the Assyrians.

Shaphan] His descendants played an important part during the last days of the Jewish monarchy. His son Ahikam saved the prophet Jeremiah from being put to death (Jer. xxvi. 24); another son, Gemariah, was one of the princes who made intercession to Jehoiakim that he would not burn Jeremiah's roll (Jer. xxxvi. 12, 25). His grandson, Gedaliah, was appointed ruler over the people that remained in Judah, after the rest had been carried captive by Nebuchadrezzar (xxv. 22; Jer. xl. 5—xli. 10).

4. *Hilkiah*] Cp. 1 Chr. vi. 13. There is no reason to suppose that he is to be identified with the father of Jeremiah, for though Jeremiah was of priestly family, he did not belong to Jerusalem (Jer. i. 1; xxxii. 6, 7; xxxvii. 11, 12).

the money which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the [1]door have gathered of the people: and let them deliver it into the hand of the workmen that 5
have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the workmen which are in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house; unto the carpenters, 6
and to the builders, and to the masons; and for buying timber and hewn stone to repair the house. Howbeit there 7
was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand; for they dealt faithfully. And 8
Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD.

[1] Heb. *threshold*

the high priest] Lit. *the great priest*, LXX. τὸν ἱερέα τὸν μέγαν. In xxv. 18 the title is *chief* ('head') *priest*. Cp. xi. 9, note.

that he may sum] Lit. *bring to an end*. From this moment the collection of money for the restoration of the Temple was to cease. LXX. (σφράγισον, 'seal up') follows, it seems, a different reading of the Hebrew. Money was collected into bags or purses, which were then closed and *sealed*. Cp. Job xiv. 17.

the money which is brought] Cp. xii. 4, 9.

the keepers of the door] These are described in 2 Chr. xxxiv. 9 as 'the Levites,' probably by an anachronism. Though in the Chronicler's own day the guardianship of the Temple was entrusted to Levitical porters (1 Chr. xxvi. 1—19), it is improbable that this was the case before the Captivity. In xi. 18 the guards are called simply 'officers' and in xii. 9 they are described not as 'Levites' but as priests. The Chronicler further speaks of the workmen who had the oversight of the restoration (*v.* 9) as Levites, but here again he seems to be thinking of the practice of his own day. The origin of the Temple Levites and the date at which they attained the position which they held in the Chronicler's time (Third Century B.C.) are questions beset with many difficulties.

5. *of the workmen*] The same Heb. phrase is translated in xii. 11 [12 Heb.] *of them that did the work*. In both passages however the meaning is rather *of them that appointed the work*, i.e. assigned the tasks to the carpenters, builders, and masons.

and let them give it &c.] These words are superfluous, being only a various reading of the first half of the verse.

6. *unto the carpenters, and to...and to*] Rather, **for the carpenters, and for...and for.**

for buying timber and hewn stone] Probably these were supplied as in Solomon's time by the Tyrians and their allies. Cp. 1 K. v. 10, 17, 18.

7. *there was no reckoning made*] Cp. xii. 15.

8. *I have found the book of the law*] The term 'book of the law'

And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan, and he read it.
9 And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have [1]emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen that have the oversight of
10 the house of the LORD. And Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book.
11 And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law,

[1] Or, *poured out*

(*sēpher tōrāh*) or 'book of the law of the LORD' means in late passages of the Old Testament, e.g. in 2 Chr. xvii. 9; Neh. viii. 3, 18, the whole Pentateuch. Scholars have shewn however that the whole five books were not written at one time, but are due to a work of compilation, which went on for several centuries. The earliest parts may reach back to Moses, the later parts, i.e. certain portions of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, were added probably after the return from the Babylonian Captivity. The 'book of the law' mentioned here must therefore have been part only, not the whole, of the Pentateuch. There is however no direct statement in Kings to tell us which part this was, but we have reason to identify it with Deuteronomy from the record of the impression made on Josiah by the reading of the book (*v.* 13) and from the account of the results which followed (xxiii. 3—23). Josiah found in the book that a covenant had been made between JEHOVAH and the people, and that (since the terms of the covenant had been broken) Judah stood in a position of extreme danger. Now these are just the facts which Deuteronomy would have taught him with unique force and eloquence. The facts of the existence of the Covenant and of the danger of breaking it are vividly set forth in Deut. iv. 1—40; v.; ix.; xxviii.; xxix. The results which followed from the reading of the book point also to Deuteronomy. Josiah carried out a more thorough destruction of idolatry than any king before him. He took moreover a new step of constructive reform by bringing the priests of the high places into Jerusalem, and providing for their support there (xxiii. 8, 9). By this last decisive step he centralized all public worship in Jerusalem, and made effective for the first time in the history of Israel the command given in Deut. xii. 10—14. His destruction of idolatrous altars and symbols was similarly in close accordance with such passages as Deut. vii. 1—5; xii. 2, 3. The further questions whether Josiah's 'book of the law' contained the whole of Deuteronomy, and whether it contained beside Deuteronomy other parts of the Pentateuch, e.g. some parts of Exodus, cannot be discussed here. The view that the moving cause of the king's reformation was the book of Deuteronomy in some form is not seriously to be gainsaid.

9. *the money*] Probably not coined money. Cp. xii. 4, note.

that he rent his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiah 12
the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the
son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the
king's servant, saying, Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, 13
and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words
of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the
LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have
not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according
unto all that which is [1]written concerning us. So Hilkiah 14
the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and
Asaiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of
Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of
the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the [2]second
quarter;) and they communed with her. And she said unto 15

[1] Or, *enjoined us* [2] Heb. *Mishneh*

11. *rent his clothes*] Cp. v. 7; xi. 14; xviii. 37; xix. 1.

12. *Ahikam the son of Shaphan*] Cp. *v.* 3, note on *Shaphan.*

Achbor the son of Micaiah] In 2 Chr. xxxiv. 20, 'Abdon the son of Micah.'

Asaiah the king's servant] Probably a confidential minister is meant. His position was perhaps like that of 'the lord on whose hand the king leaned' (vii. 2).

13. *for the people, and for all Judah*] In 2 Chr. xxxiv. 21, 'for them that are left in Israel and in Judah.'

that is kindled] So LXX. (A), ἡ ἐκκεκαυμένη. LXX. (B), however, has ἡ ἐκκεχυμένη, 'that is poured out,' in agreement with 2 Chr. xxxiv. 21. But the wrath was not 'poured out' until the days of Nebuchadrezzar.

written concerning us] Rather as marg., **enjoined us.**

14. *Huldah the prophetess*] Jeremiah had received the call to be a prophet five years before (Jer. i. 2), but he shrank from the mission, and it is probable that he did not gain the ear of his countrymen till towards the close of Josiah's reign. Of Huldah we know nothing beyond what is told us in this chapter and in the parallel passage of Chronicles.

Tikvah, the son of Harhas] In 2 Chr. xxxiv. 22 (R.V.), 'Tokhath, the son of Hasrah.' Nothing is known about him.

keeper of the wardrobe] Lit. *keeper of the garments.* The title is in the masc., and refers to Shallum. There is nothing to shew whether he was a king's officer, or a temple officer. Cp. x. 22. The Heb. word *bĕgādîm* is applied to king's robes (xix. 1), to priestly garments (Exod. xxviii. 2, 4), and to clothes in general.

the second quarter] Cp. Zeph. i. 10. Perhaps *second district* would be a better translation, for there is no word in the Hebrew representing

16 them, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: Tell ye the
man that sent you unto me, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I
will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants
thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of
17 Judah hath read: because they have forsaken me, and have
burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke
me to anger with all the work of their hands; therefore my
wrath shall be kindled against this place, and it shall not be
18 quenched. But unto the king of Judah, who sent you to
inquire of the LORD, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith
the LORD, the God of Israel: As touching the words which
19 thou hast heard, because thine heart was tender, and thou
didst humble thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest
what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants
thereof, that they should become [1]a desolation and a curse,
and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have
20 heard thee, saith the LORD. Therefore, behold, I will
gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to

[1] Or, *an astonishment*

quarter. Jerusalem according to its ancient physical features might well be reckoned as divided into two districts, eastern and western, by the deep valley of the Tyropœon. From Neh. iii. 9, 12 it appears as if in Nehemiah's time the city was divided into two halves for administrative purposes; and in Neh. xi. 9, 'second over the city' is rendered by some 'over the second part (*Mishneh*) of the city.' The translation of A.V., 'in the college,' is supported only by the Targum, and is highly fanciful.

16. *Behold, I will bring evil upon this place*] Cp. xxi. 12; Jer. xix. 3. For the phrase 'this place,' rather than 'Jerusalem,' see Deut. xii. 11, 14. It is upon 'the place' which the LORD once 'chose to put His name there' that He will now 'bring evil.'

17. *my wrath shall be kindled*] In 2 Chr. xxxiv. 25, 'is my wrath poured out.' Cp. *v.* 13, note. God's wrath is kindled against 'this place,' because in 'this place' altars had been erected to other gods. Cp. xxi. 4.

19. *tender*] The opposite of 'stubborn.'

didst humble thyself] The Heb. word is the same as in 1 K. xxi. 29.

a desolation] Cp. 1 K. ix. 8.

a curse] The same Heb. word as in Jer. xxix. 22.

20. *thou shalt be gathered*] The verb 'gather' is used in Hebrew of bringing an individual into the company of others. Cp. Gen. xxv. 8.

thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

23 And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the 2 elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up to the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD. And 3 the king stood [1]by the pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all

[1] Or, *on the platform*

neither shall thine eyes see] The same phrase as in Gen. xxi. 16; xliv. 34. It means to look upon with the attention caused either *by grief*, as in these passages, or *by joy* as in x. 16 (see note there).

CH. XXIII. 1—3 (=2 Chr. xxxiv. 29—32 *a*). THE RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT WITH JEHOVAH.

1. *and they gathered*] It is better to read, **and gathered** (sing.); LXX. καὶ συνήγαγεν.

2. *the priests, and the prophets*] In Jeremiah the two classes are frequently thus mentioned together. Cp. Jer. xiii. 13; xxvi. 7. When prophets are thus spoken of in the mass, we must think of them rather as men specially devoted to the service of God (like the monks of the Christian Church), than as men with a special Divine gift like Isaiah or Jeremiah. The Chronicler gives, 'the priests and *the Levites*' (cp. xxii. 4, note on *the keepers of the door*).

he read] Or, *one read*. The subject of the verb according to Heb. idiom may be indefinite. For another great occasion on which the book of the law was read see Neh. viii.

the book of the covenant] In xxii. 8 it is called 'the book of the law'; but a book which consisted almost entirely of the greater part of Deuteronomy might be called with equal fitness by either title.

3. *by the pillar*] Cp. xi. 14 (with marg.). Solomon (according to 2 Chr. vi. 13) stood on a similar occasion on 'a brasen scaffold' which he had made.

made a covenant] Lit. *made the covenant*, i.e. renewed the Deuteronomic covenant. Similarly 'build' is used for 'rebuild' in 1 K. ix. 17.

to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes] A phrase characteristic of Kings, but derived from Deuteronomy. Cp. 1 K. ii. 3; Deut. vi. 17.

his heart, and all *his* soul, to [1]confirm the words of this covenant that were written in this book: and all the people
4 stood to the covenant. And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the

[1] Or, *perform*

with all his *heart, and all* his *soul*] Another similarly characteristic phrase. Cp. 1 K. ii. 4; Deut. iv. 29.

to confirm] Marg. *to perform*. As this was the renewal of a covenant, the former is the better rendering.

and all the people stood to the covenant] No parallel can be found to the phrase 'stood to the covenant,' for which perhaps we should expect 'entered into the covenant' (Jer. xxxiv. 10). Probably the text has suffered, for the phrase seems to be a fragment of a much longer statement, such as, 'they sacrificed a calf, and cut it in twain, *and all the people passed between the parts thereof*.' Cp. Jer. xxxiv. 18, where a similar solemn covenant is referred to. The Heb. words for 'stood' and 'passed,' and those for 'to the covenant' and 'between the parts thereof' respectively have a general resemblance to each other, and would be readily confused by a hasty scribe. The writer of Chronicles was evidently at a loss, for he omitted altogether the Heb. word which is here translated *to the covenant* (2 Chr. xxxiv. 32).

4—20 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 3—7, 33). JOSIAH DESTROYS THE SYMBOLS OF IDOLATRY.

The forms of the verbs used in the Hebrew text of *vv.* 4—14 shew that this section is composed of two passages which have been interwoven with one another. The starting point for unravelling them is the statement of *v.* 4 that the king gave certain commands to the priest Hilkiah. These commands are easily to be identified by the forms of the verbs used, which are different from the forms of ordinary narrative. The directions are these: *v.* 4, to bring forth the idolatrous 'vessels' or 'things' (a word of quite general meaning) from the Temple; *v.* 5 *a*, to suppress the *Chĕmārīm*; *v.* 8 *b*, to break down the high places erected on the walls of Jerusalem; *v.* 10, to defile Topheth; *v.* 14, to destroy the *maççēbōth* and *ăshērīm*. The execution of the commands is narrated in *vv.* 5 *b*—8 *a*, and 11—13. Only in the last two verses is the king introduced as the actor, and then it is a case of undoing the idolatrous acts of previous kings. Most of the work was no doubt done by the priests and their assistants under some compulsion from the king. The severity exercised against the idolatrous priests, who were slain by their altars and then burnt upon them (*v.* 20), no doubt helped to enforce the execution of the king's orders. The Deuteronomic law enjoined that Israelites who fell away to idolatry were to be put to death without mercy (Deut. xiii. 12—18).

4. *the high priest*] Cp. xxii. 4, note.

and the priests of the second order] Better, **and the second priests**. Cp. xxv. 18, where the same ranks are given: (1) 'high' or 'chief

keepers of the [1]door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the Asherah, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Beth-el. And he put down the 5
[2]idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the [3]planets, and to all the host of heaven. And he 6
brought out the Asherah from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the [4]common people.

[1] Heb. *threshold* [2] Heb. *Chemarim* See Hos. x. 5, Zeph. i. 4
[3] Or, *twelve signs* [4] Heb. *children of the people*

priest'; (2) 'second priest' or 'priests'; (3) 'keepers of the door.' The Targum gives the later title of *Sĕgan* or *Sāgān* (i.e. 'deputy of the High Priest') to the second rank. A high priest might of course have more than one deputy, so that it is unnecessary to read the singular here.

the keepers of the door] Cp. xxii. 4, note.

for the Asherah] Rather, **for Asherah.** Cp. xxi. 4.

he burned them] The wooden symbol of Asherah and any earthern vessels would be destroyed by fire. Vessels of metal however after passing through the fire would according to the law of Num. xxxi. 22, 23 be accounted clean.

Kidron] Cp. 1 K. xv. 13, note.

unto Beth-el] To desecrate the idolatrous sanctuary there. Cp. *vv.* 15, 16.

5. *the idolatrous priests*] Cp. marg. The Heb. word means simply 'priests,' but since the usual term for priests of JEHOVAH is *kōhănīm* (plur. of *kōhēn*), *Chemarim* has the connotation of *irregular* or *foreign* priests.

to burn incense] An impossible translation; the words are corrupt, and should be omitted.

the planets] Marg. *the twelve signs*, i.e. of the Zodiac. Cp. xvii. 16, note.

6. *the graves of the common people*] Lit. *the grave of the sons of the people* (Jer. xxvi. 23). The Heb. text offers no satisfactory sense. A small change in the Hebrew would give 'the grave (or 'holy place') of the Son of Hinnom,' and this reading is not improbable. Children were burnt in the valley of the Son of Hinnom (Jer. vii. 31; xix. 2—6), which was part of the valley of the Kidron (1 K. xv. 13). The ashes would be thrown here in order to desecrate an idolatrous sanctuary.

7 And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that were
in the house of the LORD, where the women wove [1]hangings
8 for the Asherah. And he brought all the priests out of the
cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests
had burned incense, from Geba to Beer-sheba; and he brake
down the high places of the gates that were at the entering
in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were
9 on a man's left hand at the gate of the city. Nevertheless
the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of
the LORD in Jerusalem, but they did eat unleavened bread
10 among their brethren. And he defiled Topheth, which is
in the valley of the [2]children of Hinnom, that no man
might make his son or his daughter to pass through the
11 fire to Molech. And he took away the horses that the

[1] Or, *tents* Heb. *houses* [2] According to another reading, *son*

7. *wove hangings for the Asherah*] Rather, **wove tents** (Heb. 'houses') **for Asherah**, i.e. for the celebration of the impure rites of the goddess.

8. *brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah*] This was in accordance with the Deuteronomic law that sacrifice was to be offered in one place only,—Jerusalem.

Geba] Cp. 1 K. xv. 22. It is mentioned as the northern extremity of Judah.

Beer-sheba] Cp. 1 K. iv. 25, note.

the high places of the gates] The roofs of houses were sometimes used as places of sacrifice. Cp. Jer. xix. 13; xxxii. 29. The high places mentioned here were perhaps on the roofs of the towers by which the gates were defended. It was probably on such a spot that Mesha of Moab offered up his son as a burnt offering 'upon the wall' (iii. 27).

9. *they did eat unleavened bread*] i.e. they were allowed to keep the Passover. At the Passover the services of so many priests were required, that the former priests of the high places were necessarily permitted to help. Cp. *v.* 22. The meaning of the verse is that the priests of the high places when brought to Jerusalem were not admitted to the status of full priests. For parallel instances see Ryle's note on Ezra ii. 63.

10. *Topheth*] The context shews that this is the name of the spot on which children were burnt to Molech. It has been suggested (on rather slight evidence) that the meaning of the name is, 'The fire-place.'

the children of Hinnom] So the *Kĕthīb*; the *Kĕrī* however (with LXX. Vulg. Targ. Peshitta) reads *the son* (sing.) *of Hinnom*. Cp. Jer. vii. 31; xix. 6.

Molech] Cp. 1 K. xi. 5, note on *Milcom*.

11. *he took away*] The same Heb. verb is rendered 'he put down' in *v.* 5. Josiah put an end to the custom of assigning horses to draw the chariots of the sun in religious processions.

kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain, which was in the precincts; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. And the altars that were 12
on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king break down, and [1]beat *them* down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron. And the 13
high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of [2]corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile. And he brake in pieces the [3]pillars, 14
and cut down the Asherim, and filled their places with the bones of men. Moreover the altar that was at Beth-el, and 15
the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, even that altar and the high place

[1] Or, *ran from thence* [2] Or, *destruction* [3] Or, *obelisks*

at the entering in of the house] Rather, **that they should not enter into the house.**

the precincts] Heb. *parvarim* here, but *parbar* in 1 Chr. xxvi. 18. These precincts were on the west of the Temple, and consisted perhaps of open colonnades. The original word is Persian, and signifies, 'lighted by the sun.'

12. *on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz*] This translation is grammatically impossible. The meaning of the Hebrew probably is, 'on the roof [of the Temple] by the upper chamber of Ahaz.' Nothing however is known of this upper chamber. The account of Ahaz's work in the Temple (xvi. 18) is very obscure.

which Manasseh had made] Cp. xxi. 5.

beat them *down from thence*] The Hebrew does not yield a satisfactory sense. The right reading may be *carried them out thence.*

13. *on the right hand*] i.e. on the south.

the mount of corruption] A detached summit of the Mount of Olives situated to the south of the road to Jericho, overlooking Kefr Silwan and called *Jebel Batn el-Hawâ*, is sometimes named 'Mons offensionis' and identified with this mount.

which Solomon...had builded] Cp. 1. K. xi. 5, 7, notes.

14. *the pillars...the Asherim*] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 23, note. Destruction of pillars and Asherim is commanded in Deut. xii. 3.

he brake down; and he burned the high place and stamped
16 it small to powder, and burned the Asherah. And as
Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were
there in the mount; and he sent, and took the bones out
of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and
defiled it, according to the word of the LORD which the
man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these things.
17 Then he said, What monument is that which I see? And
the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the
man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these
things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el.
18 And he said, Let him be; let no man move his bones. So
they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that
19 came out of Samaria. And all the houses also of the high
places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of
Israel had made to provoke *the* LORD to anger, Josiah took
away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had
20 done in Beth-el. And he [1]slew all the priests of the high
places that were there, upon the altars, and burned men's
bones upon them; and he returned to Jerusalem.
21 And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep

[1] Or, *sacrificed*

15. *and he burned the high place*] The text is faulty; a high place could not be 'burnt.' Cp. 1 K. xi. 5, note. LXX. has, *καὶ συνέτριψεν τοὺς λίθους αὐτοῦ*, 'and he beat the stones thereof small.'

16. *according to the word of the* LORD] See 1 K. xiii. 2.

18. *that came out of Samaria*] By this description 'the old prophet that dwelt in Bethel' is meant. Cp. 1 K. xiii. 11, 31, 32.

19. *in the cities of Samaria*] Samaria was an Assyrian province, but by the eighteenth year of Josiah the empire of the Assyrians was already tottering to its fall. Josiah met no resistance from the Great King in his reforms, but on the contrary he was able to assert himself in the north. Cp. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 9.

20. *he slew*] Better as marg., **he sacrificed**. The priests were slain upon their own altars. Cp. *v.* 5, note.

21—23 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxv. 1—19). JOSIAH'S PASSOVER.

This Passover is fully described in the parallel passage of Chronicles. There the Levites, including the 'singers, the sons of Asaph,' are represented as taking a very important part in the feast. This full description is to be regarded only as a reconstruction of the scene based on the writer's knowledge of the practice of his own day.

the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant. Surely there was not kept such 22
a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel,
[1]nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings
of Judah; but in the eighteenth year of king Josiah was this 23
passover kept to the LORD in Jerusalem. Moreover them 24
that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the teraphim,
and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in
the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away,
that he might [2]confirm the words of the law which were
written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the
house of the LORD. And like unto him was there no king 25
before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and

[1] Or, *even in all...and of* [2] Or, *perform*

21. *as it is written*] The ordinance of the Passover is given in Deut. xvi. 1—8. There the victim may be taken 'from the flock or the herd'; in Exod. xii. 3—5 the victim can only be a lamb.

22. *from the days of the judges*] In 2 Chr. xxxv. 18, 'from the days of Samuel the prophet.'

23. *in the eighteenth year*] The Passover was held in the spring in the month Abib. This month, according to Exod. xii. 2, was to be reckoned the first month of the year. It can however hardly have been so reckoned in the days of Josiah. In his eighteenth year took place, *first*, the repair of the temple (xxii. 3 ff.), *secondly*, a cleansing of the temple and of the land from the symbols of idolatry (xxiii. 4 ff.), and *thirdly*, a great celebration of the Passover. The first two measures cannot have been carried out in the thirteen days of Abib which preceded the Passover. Probably therefore the year is reckoned as beginning in the autumn in the month Tishri after the manner of the 'civil' year.

24—27. THE LORD'S WRATH NOT TURNED AWAY.

24. *them that had familiar spirits*] Cp. xxi. 6; 1 Sam. xxviii. 3—25; Isa. viii. 19. Such persons professed to be able to communicate with the spirits of the dead.

teraphim] The Heb. word *tĕrāphīm* is left untranslated in R.V., but A.V. has 'images.' LXX. in Kings has *θεραφεὶν*, but in Genesis *εἴδωλα*, 'idols.' The word is plural in form, and probably also in meaning. The *teraphim* were religious symbols, perhaps images, for household use (Gen. xxxi. 19, 30, called 'gods'; 1 Sam. xix. 13). They were consulted as oracles (Ezek. xxi. 21; Zech. x. 2).

that were spied] Lit. *that were seen*; Aquila, *ἃ ὡράθησαν*. LXX. simply, *τὰ γεγονότα*, Vulg. *quae fuerunt*, 'which happened.'

the words of the law] Deut. xviii. 10, 11.

25. *before him*] Cp. xviii. 5, note.

with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.
26 Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had
27 provoked him withal. And the LORD said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this city which I have chosen, even Jerusalem,
28 and the house of which I said, My name shall be there. Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?
29 In his days Pharaoh-necoh king of Egypt went up against

with all his heart, &c.] Cp. Deut. vi. 5.
26. *Manasseh*] Cp. xxi. 11—16; xxiv. 3, 4; Jer. xv. 4.
27. *out of my sight*] Rather, **out of my presence**.

28—30 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxv. 20—27). THE EPILOGUE OF JOSIAH'S REIGN.

The accounts of Josiah's death given here and in Chron. differ widely from one another. Both begin with the statement that Necoh (Neco) king of Egypt went up for battle on the Euphrates, but from this point the accounts are different. According to Chron. Josiah *went out* (the word often suggests hostility) *to meet* Necoh, but in Kings the statement is simply that the Jewish king *went to meet* Necoh, an expression used of peaceful journeys. Cp. xvi. 10 (Ahaz meets Tiglath-pileser); 1 K. xviii. 16 (Obadiah meets Ahab). The Chronicler then narrates that Necoh sent to Josiah deprecating his hostility; that Josiah refused to be appeased; that he came to fight in *the valley of* Megiddo, and that he was mortally wounded by the archers. His servants then took him out of his chariot, presumably his war-chariot. Of all this nothing is said in Kings. We are told simply that *Necoh slew* Josiah *in Megiddo when he saw him*; in other words there was no parley such as Josiah sought; the Egyptians killed him in Megiddo as soon as he came within sight of their king. The words suggest an assassination; there is no hint of a battle. Josiah no doubt hoped to be confirmed in his kingdom by Necoh, but the Egyptian preferred to have a vassal of less energetic character. Thus we must conclude that there were two different traditions regarding the manner in which Josiah met his death, and that one of these has been adopted in Kings, the other in Chronicles.

29. *Pharaoh-necoh*] This was Nekau II. (reigned 610—594 B.C., Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*, III. 335), who, according to Herodotus (II. 159), conquered the 'Syrians' at 'Magdolus,' and captured 'Cadytis a great city of Syria.' Herodotus no doubt alludes to the

the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him. And his servants carried him in a chariot 30 dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began 31 to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah

campaign of Necoh which is recorded in Kings and Chronicles, though it is improbable that the victory over *the Syrians at Magdolus* is another form of the tradition of a defeat of *the Jews at Megiddo* preserved in Chronicles. Necoh's enterprise (circ. 608 B.C.) was no doubt connected with the great movement in Western Asia which resulted in the downfall of the Assyrian Empire. The last king of Assyria, Sin-shar-ishkun (Saracos), was at war with Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon. The latter called in the Medes to help him, and Nineveh itself was besieged by them. The statement of Herodotus (I. 106) that *the Medes captured Nineveh* seems now to be confirmed by an inscription of Nabu-na'id king of Babylon, first published in 1896. This event took place in 607—6 B.C. Probably Necoh's intention was to secure some part of the spoils of the falling Empire. He was however disappointed, for in 605 B.C. he was utterly defeated at Carchemish on the Euphrates by Nebuchadrezzar (Jer. xlvi. 2), and was forced to retire to Egypt.

the king of Assyria] It is sometimes taken for granted that Josiah was a tributary of the Assyrian empire, and that he would naturally take up the quarrel of his Assyrian suzerain. But Assyria was very weak after the death of Asshur-bani-pal in 625 B.C., and it is more probable that the kingdom of Judah was able to maintain to a large extent its independence.

went against him] Rather, **went to meet him.**

Megiddo] Cp. 1 K. iv. 12, note.

30. *the people of the land took Jehoahaz*] The populace chose Jehoahaz rather than his older half-brother Jehoiakim. Cp. *v.* 35. According to 1 Chr. iii. 15 he was the youngest of the four sons of Josiah. The right of primogeniture was not always recognised in the matter of succession to the throne. Cp. the case of Solomon and Adonijah (1 K. i. 5—10, Prefatory Note).

31—35 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 2—4). JEHOAHAZ DEPOSED IN FAVOUR OF JEHOIAKIM.

31. *Jehoahaz*] Called 'Shallum' in 1 Chr. iii. 15; Jer. xxii. 10—12.

Hamutal] She was the mother also of Zedekiah (xxiv. 18).

32 of Libnah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of
33 the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. And Pharaoh-necoh put him in bands at Riblah in the land of Hamath, [1]that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and put the land to a [2]tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a
34 talent of gold. And Pharaoh-necoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father, and changed his name to Jehoiakim: but he took Jehoahaz away; and he
35 came to Egypt, and died there. And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give it unto Pharaoh-necoh.

36 Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Zebidah the daughter of Pedaiah of
37 Rumah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of

[1] According to another reading, *when he reigned* [2] Or, *fine*

Libnah] Cp. viii. 22, note.

32. *his fathers*] Such as Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon. Josiah of course is excluded. The compiler of Kings wishes to point out that there was an unfaithfulness of long standing, for only such a sin could be appropriately punished by so terrible a punishment as the Babylonian Captivity. Jeremiah predicts the fate of Jehoahaz, that he should never return from exile, but says nothing about his character.

33. *Riblah*] According to Baedeker, *Palestine*, page 377 (ed. 2), Riblah is 7½ hours south of Homs on the Nahr el-'Asi.

that he might not reign] The text is to be preferred to marg.

a tribute] Better as marg., **a fine.** It was to be regarded as a punishment on the people of the land for setting up a king without Necoh's permission.

an hundred talents] Probably 25 tons of silver. See v. 5, with note.

34. *changed his name to Jehoiakim*] The meaning of the name is, 'JEHOVAH will confirm it.' Jehoiakim probably was obliged to swear by the name of JEHOVAH to be faithful to Necoh. His new name is intended to remind him of his oath.

and died there] Jer. xxii. 12.

35. *he taxed the land*] Rather, **he made a valuation of the land.** Cp. xv. 20. He raised a kind of Income Tax.

his taxation] Rather, **his valuation.**

36—XXIV. 7 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 5—8). THE REIGN OF JEHOIAKIM.

36. *Rumah*] Possibly the *Arumah* of Jud. ix. 41.

the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. In 24
his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and
Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned
and rebelled against him. And the LORD sent against him 2
bands of the Chaldeans, and bands of the Syrians, and
bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of
Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, ac-

37. *he did that which was evil*] Cp. Jer. xix. 3—5; xxii. 13—19; xxvi. 20—23; xxxvi. 9—26. The prophet accuses the king of oppression of the poor and of shedding innocent blood. Jehoiakim slew a certain prophet named Uriah, and sought to put Jeremiah himself to death. He burnt the roll of Jeremiah's prophecies in defiance of the warnings which they contained. He practised idolatry.

his fathers] Cp. *v.* 32, note.

CH. XXIV.

1. *Nebuchadnezzar*] A more accurate form of this name is *Nebuchadrezzar*, as in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. It represents the *Nabukudurri-uṣur* of the Inscriptions. The name is said to mean, 'O Nebo, defend the crown' (or 'the boundary'), Nebo being a divinity who was regarded as the son of Marduk the great god of Babylon. Nebuchadrezzar reigned 604—561 B.C., and was succeeded by Evil-merodach (Amil-Marduk) (xxv. 27). The only purely historical inscription of his reign which is still preserved relates to a campaign in Egypt in the year 568 B.C. Cp. Jer. xliii. 10—13. The accounts of him given in Dan. ii.—iv. are not to be regarded as historical, but rather as stories told for the sake of the moral they convey, as Old Testament parables indeed. Nebuchadrezzar's subjugation of Judah was no doubt part of a large scheme which aimed at the conquest of Egypt. The kings of the Chaldeans took up the policy of their predecessors the kings of Assyria. Indeed the Chaldean empire might be described as the Assyrian empire revived, with Babylon as the capital instead of Nineveh. The dominions and the ambitions of the two empires were almost the same.

2. *bands of the Chaldeans*] Apparently Nebuchadrezzar made no attempt to take Jerusalem, being probably engaged nearer home, but his officers and clients led marauding bands into Judah and laid the country waste. The Chaldeans were the men of the marshes and of the canal-intersected country south of Babylon, who had imposed a king of their own race (Nebuchadrezzar) on Babylon. They were thus distinct from the Babylonians, but they formed the kernel of the armies of the new empire. Hence Nebuchadrezzar is called 'king of Babylon,' while the warriors who overthrew Judah and Jerusalem are called 'Chaldeans.'

Syrians...Moabites...children of Ammon] The Chaldeans, having first conquered these, used them as auxiliaries in the subjugation of their neighbours. Cp. Jer. xxxv. 11 ('the army of the Syrians').

cording to the word of the LORD, which he spake by the
3 hand of his servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of the LORD came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all
4 that he did; and also for the innocent blood that he shed; for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood: and the LORD
5 would not pardon. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the
6 chronicles of the kings of Judah? So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.
7 And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken, from the brook of Egypt unto the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the king of Egypt.
8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to

3. *for the sins of Manasseh*] Cp. xxi. 11 ff.; xxiii. 25, 26.

6. *So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers*] The compiler of Kings says no more concerning the results of Jehoiakim's rebellion against Nebuchadrezzar than that the marauding bands of the Chaldeans and their confederates laid Judah waste. Of the fate of Jehoiakim himself there is no word. On the other hand it is stated in 2 Chr. xxxvi. 6, 7; Dan. i. 1, 2; 1 Esd. i. 40, 41 that Nebuchadrezzar carried the Jewish king off to Babylon together with 'some' of the vessels of the Temple. This statement, however, seems to be due to a confusion between Jehoiakim and his son Jehoiachin, who was indeed so carried off with many of the Temple vessels. Since, however, Jehoiachin reigned only 'three months' (Hebrew inclusive reckoning), it is probable that the punishment which overtook him was intended for his father. Jehoiakim escaped, it seems, by dying before Nebuchadrezzar could take vengeance. From Jer. xxii. 18, 19 we may probably conclude that he met his death under unhappy conditions in or near Jerusalem itself. He may have been assassinated, like many of his predecessors.

7. *came not again any more out of his land*] At this time, as at many others, the Egyptians were content *to sit still* (Isa. xxx. 7). In their own country in the midst of the network of waterways formed by the branches of the Nile they were formidable, but outside their own frontiers they shewed but little daring.

the brook of Egypt] Cp. 1 K. viii. 65, note.

8—17 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 9, 10). JEHOIACHIN. THE FIRST CAPTIVITY.

8. *Jehoiachin*] In 1 Chr. iii. 16 *Jeconiah*; in Jer. xxii. 24, 28 *Coniah*. The essential (Hebrew) elements of the name are the same in these three forms.

reign; and he reigned in Jerusalem three months: and his mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight 9
of the LORD, according to all that his father had done. At 10
that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And 11
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came unto the city, while his servants were besieging it; and Jehoiachin the king of 12
Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his [1]officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign.
And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of 13
the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel

[1] Or, *eunuchs*

eighteen years old] His father Jehoiakim died at the age of thirty-five or thirty-six (xxiii. 36), but it is possible that his eldest son was eighteen at the time. The reading of Chron., *eight years old*, is hard to reconcile with the denunciation of him in Jer. xxii.

Elnathan] This name is found also in the form *Nathanael* (John i. 45) and abbreviated to *Nathan*.

9. *that which was evil*] Cp. Jer. xxii. 20—30.

10. *the servants of Nebuchadnezzar...came up*] The Heb. text shews signs of hesitation between this reading and a shorter reading, *Nebuchadnezzar came up*. The latter agrees with LXX.

12. *and his mother*] Cp. xi. 1 (note on *Athaliah*); 1 K. ii. 19, note; xv. 13.

his servants] The great ministers of state. Cp. 1 K. x. 5, notes.

officers] Marg. *eunuchs*. Eunuchs from time to time are appointed to high office, and even to military command, in the East. For a modern instance see Layard's interesting account of the governor of the province of Isfahan, whom he met in 1840 (*Early Adventures*, pages 114—118, ed. 1894).

in the eighth year] i.e. of Nebuchadrezzar's reign.

13. *And he carried*] Or, *And one carried*. The subject is indefinite; the work was done by the Chaldean army.

cut in pieces all the vessels of gold] Probably this means not the cutting up of golden cups and the like vessels, but rather the cutting off of the overlaying of gold from walls and pillars. Cp. xviii. 16, where it is said that Hezekiah 'cut in pieces the doors of the Temple' (literal translation) in order to send gold as tribute to the king of Assyria.

had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.
14 And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths; none remained, save
15 the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon; and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his [1]officers, and the [2]chief men of the land, carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon.
16 And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and the craftsmen and the smiths a thousand, all of them strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought
17 captive to Babylon. And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

[1] Or, *eunuchs* [2] Or, *mighty*

as the LORD had said] Cp. xx. 17, where, however, nothing is said regarding the Temple treasures.

14. *And he carried away &c.*] This verse is written in a later style of Hebrew, and is apparently meant to be a summary statement of the facts given in *vv.* 15, 16.

ten thousand captives] This took place in the *eighth* year (*v.* 12) of Nebuchadrezzar. In Jer. lii. 28 it is said that in the *seventh* year 3023 Jews were led away. In spite of the difference of date and number it is probable that the same event is referred to in both passages, for in the parallel case the *nineteenth* year of Nebuchadrezzar (2 K. xxv. 8) seems to be the same as the *eighteenth* year (so called) of Jer. lii. 29. Plainly there was some doubt which year was to be reckoned the first of Nebuchadrezzar. The discrepancy as to the number of the captives is due no doubt to the use of different sources. The higher number (10,000) is perhaps an official Chaldean reckoning in which no discrimination was made between natives of Judaea and other captives who were brought from Palestine at the same time. Cp. note on xxv. 21.

smiths] A smith was a valuable servant in himself, and a dangerous power to leave in the hands of an enemy. Cp. 1 Sam. xiii. 19. Asshur-bani-pal (*K.I.B.* II. 210) says, 'The bowmen...artisans...and artificers (?), whom I carried away as booty from Elam I added to my royal forces.'

the poorest sort] The same Heb. phrase is translated 'the poorest' in xxv. 12. The statement that only the poorest remained must be understood with some qualification, for some men of leading were left to help the new king, Zedekiah. Cp. xxv. 19; and especially Jer. xxiv. The prophet Jeremiah was one of those who were left in Judah.

17. *Mattaniah*] The name means, 'Gift of JEHOVAH.' The new name, *Zedekiah*, means 'JEHOVAH is my righteousness'; the bearer of it

Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began 18
to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and
his mother's name was [1]Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah
of Libnah. And he did that which was evil in the sight 19
of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.
For through the anger of the LORD did it come to pass in 20
Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from
his presence: and Zedekiah rebelled against the king of
Babylon. And it came to pass in the ninth year of his 25
reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month,
that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his
army, against Jerusalem, and encamped against it; and they
built forts against it round about. So the city was besieged 2

[1] Heb. *Hamital*

is expected to maintain righteousness in his dealings with his suzerain, who imposed upon him an oath of allegiance in the name of JEHOVAH. Cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 13; Ezek. xvii. 11—14 (a very interesting passage).

18—XXV. 7 (=Jer. lii. 1—11; cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 11—13; Jer. xxxix. 1—7). THE REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH.

Very little is said concerning Zedekiah in the book of Chronicles, but the book of Jeremiah contains many notices of him. See Jer. xxiv.; xxvii. 12—xxix. 32; xxxii. 1—5; Ezek. xvii. 11—21; xxi. 25.

18. *Hamutal*] Heb. *Hamital.* The form with 'i' is supported by the LXX. here and also in xxiii. 31; Jer. lii. 1.

19. *that which was evil*] He would not listen to Jeremiah, and he broke his oath to the king of Babylon. Ezekiel in exile addresses him as 'wicked one' (Ezek. xxi. 25).

20. *For through the anger...in Jerusalem*] The text seems to be faulty. Probably we should read, **And the anger of the LORD arose against Jerusalem.** Cp. Ps. lxxviii. 21; 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16.

Zedekiah rebelled] He did this in reliance on help from Egypt. Cp. Jer. xxxvii. 5 ff.; Ezek. xvii. 15. Jeremiah consistently advised the king to submit to Babylon (Jer. xxi. 1—10; xxxiv. 1—3, 21, 22; xxxvii. 6—10; xxxviii. 17—23.

CH. XXV.

1. *in the ninth year &c.*] Cp. Ezek. xxiv. 1, 2.

built forts] Cp. Ezek. xxi. 22 [27, Heb.].

3 unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. On the ninth
day of the *fourth* month the famine was sore in the city, so
4 that there was no bread for the people of the land. Then
a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war *fled*
by night by the way of the gate between the two walls,
which was by the king's garden: (now the Chaldeans were
against the city round about:) and *the king* went by the way
5 of the Arabah. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued
after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho:
6 and all his army was scattered from him. Then they took
the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to
7 Riblah; and they [1]gave judgement upon him. And they
slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the

[1] Or, *spake with him of judgement*

2. *unto the eleventh year*] The agony was prolonged, partly through the natural strength of the city, partly through the momentary success of the king of Egypt in raising the siege (Jer. xxxvii. 5).

3. *of the* fourth *month*] The number of the month is supplied from Jer. lii. 6. When the months are designated by numbers, the first month, the beginning of the year, is to be reckoned from the spring. The fourth month would thus correspond roughly with July.

4. fled *by night*] The word 'fled,' wanting in the Hebrew, is supplied from Jer. lii. 7.

the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden] This gate was situated near the pool of Siloam (Neh. iii. 15, 'Shelah' = 'Shiloah'). Of the 'two walls' mentioned perhaps one included the old pool, while the other excluded it from the limits of the city. The remains of two such walls have been discovered (Bliss and Dickie, *Excavations at Jerusalem* 1894—1897, London, 1898), though it has not been proved that these remains are as old as the Chaldean period. Siloam is on the south-east of the city, so that it was a good starting place for a flight towards the Jordan valley.

the Arabah] A name given to the deep valley running from north to south in which the Jordan flows. The plural of the word is used in *v.* 5, 'the *plains* of Jericho,' by which is meant the western part of the valley. When the eastern part is intended the phrase 'the *plains* of Moab' may be used.

6. *Riblah*] Cp. xxiii. 33, note.

they gave] Better (as Jer. lii. 9), **he** (Nebuchadrezzar) **gave.**

7. *put out the eyes*] A punishment inflicted by Assyrian kings on those whom they condemned as rebellious. As late as 1840 it was commonly inflicted under the same circumstances by the Shah of Persia (Layard, *Early Adventures*, page 345, ed. 1894).

eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

Now in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the 8
month, which was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: and he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house; 9
and all the houses of Jerusalem, even every great house, burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldeans, 10
that were *with* the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. And the residue of the 11
people that were left in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the residue of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away captive. But the captain of the guard left of the 12

in fetters] The Heb. word is of the dual form; it probably means 'with two chains.' Cp. Acts xii. 6. Zedekiah remained in custody till his death (Jer. lii. 11).

8—21 (=Jer. lii. 12—27; cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 18—20; Jer. xxxix. 8—10). THE SECOND CAPTIVITY. FURTHER PUNISHMENT INFLICTED BY NEBUZARADAN.

8. *the seventh day*] According to Jer. lii. 12, *the tenth day*. The Peshitta has *the ninth day*.

Nebuzaradan] A name compounded like *Nebuchadrezzar* with the name of the god Nebo (Nabu). It signifies, 'Nebo giveth seed (i.e. a son).'

captain of the guard] LXX. ἀρχιμάγειρος, 'chief cook.' The Heb. word *ṭabbāḥ* means 'one who slaughters' either animals (for food) or men (enemies); in 1 Sam. ix. 23, 24, it is translated, 'cook.' The two functions were originally performed by the same men.

a servant of the king] He was one of Nebuchadrezzar's favoured officers, 'one who stood before the king,' in the language of Jer. lii. 12.

10. *brake down*] Probably all that is meant is that sufficient breaches were made in the walls. The addition of the word *all* ('all the walls') in Jer. lii. 14 is probably an overstatement. Cp. xiv. 13.

11. *those that fell away*] During the prolonged siege and the famine which accompanied it some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled from the city to the Chaldeans (Jer. xxxviii. 19), partly perhaps owing to the warnings given by the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. xxxviii. 2). Jeremiah himself was charged with attempting to desert to the enemy (Jer. xxxvii. 13).

of the multitude] Read, **of the artificers.** So Jer. lii. 15, marg.

poorest of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.
13 And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD,
and the bases and the brasen sea that were in the house of
the LORD, did the Chaldeans break in pieces, and carried
14 the brass of them to Babylon. And the pots, and the
shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the
vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away.
15 And the firepans, and the basons; that which was of gold,
in gold, and that which was of silver, in silver, the captain of
16 the guard took away. The two pillars, the one sea, and the
bases, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD;
17 the brass of all these vessels was without weight. The
height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and a chapiter
of brass was upon it: and the height of the chapiter was
three cubits; with network and pomegranates upon the
chapiter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had
18 the second pillar with network. And the captain of the
guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the

12. *and husbandmen*] This translation follows the Heb. text of the parallel passage, Jer. lii. 16, but the Heb. word used there is a ἅπαξ λεγόμενον, and both the form and the meaning are uncertain. The Heb. (consonantal) text of Kings as it stands should be translated, **and for the cisterns**, i.e. *and for* the care of *the cisterns*, lest they should fall out of repair, or be choked, and so there should be a lack of water, a very important consideration in Palestine.

13. *the pillars of brass*] Described in *v.* 17. The two pillars called Jachin and Boaz are meant (1 K. vii. 15—22).

the bases] The ten bases (1 K. vii. 27—37) were the stands on which the ten lavers (1 K. vii. 38, 39) were placed. Probably the 'lavers' are to be understood as included, unless Ahaz had melted them down (xvi. 17).

the brasen sea] 1 K. vii. 23—26.

14. *pots*] Cp. 1 K. vii. 40 (note), 45; Exod. xxvii. 3.

15. *basons*] Cp. 1 K. vii. 45, note.

16. *without weight*] 1 K. vii. 47.

17. *The height &c.*] See note on 1 K. vii. 15.

and like unto these &c.] Read, **and the second pillar had pomegranates like unto these upon the network**. A comparison with the parallel passage, Jer. lii. 22, suggests that the word 'pomegranates' has fallen out.

18. *Seraiah*] 1 Chr. vi. 14; Ezra vii. 1. He was an ancestor of 'Ezra the scribe.'

the chief priest] Cp. xxii. 4, note.

Zephaniah] He was sent by Zedekiah to enquire of the LORD from

second priest, and the three keepers of the [1]door: and out 19
of the city he took an [2]officer that was set over the men of
war; and five men of them that saw the king's face, which
were found in the city; and the [3]scribe, the captain of the
host, which mustered the people of the land; and threescore
men of the people of the land, that were found in the city.
And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them, and 20
brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah. And the 21
king of Babylon smote them, and put them to death at
Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away

[1] Heb. *threshold* [2] Or, *eunuch*
[3] Or, *scribe of the captain of the host*

Jeremiah (Jer. xxi. 1; xxxvii. 3). Cp. also Jer. xxix. 24—29, from which it appears that he and the rest of the priests were urged in letters from Babylon to take strong measures against Jeremiah. Though we cannot speak with certainty of Zephaniah's own attitude, it is clear that the priests were among the chief opponents of the great prophet (Jer. v. 31; xx. 1; xxvi. 7, 8).

the second priest] Cp. xxiii. 4.

keepers of the door] Cp. xxiii. 4.

19. *officer*] Cp. xxiv. 12, note.

five men of them that saw the king's face] i.e. five of the king's confidential advisers; in Jer. lii. 25, the number is given as *seven*. Cp. Esth. i. 14, 'the seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, and sat first in the kingdom.'

the scribe, the captain of the host] The only grammatical rendering. Marg. agrees with Jer. lii. 25, but there the Heb. reading is slightly different. For an illustration of the nature of the duties performed by military scribes, cp. 1 Macc. v. 42, 'Now when Judas came nigh unto the brook of water, he caused the scribes of the people to remain by the brook, and gave commandment unto them, saying, Suffer no man to encamp, but let all come to the battle. And he crossed over the first against them,' &c.

21. *So Judah was carried away*] At this point in the narrative there is an additional passage in Jer. lii. (*vv.* 28—30) giving an estimate of the numbers carried away captive under Nebuchadrezzar, thus:

(1)	In the seventh year of Nebuchadrezzar .	3023
(2)	In his eighteenth year	832
(3)	In his twenty-third year	745
	Total	4600

It is clear that (1) refers to the event related in xxiv. 12—16 as belonging to the eighth year of the king of Babylon, (2) similarly refers to the event assigned in xxv. 8—11 to the nineteenth year of the same

22 captive out of his land. And as for the people that were left in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, governor.

23 Now when all the captains of the forces, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite, they and their men.

24 And Gedaliah sware to them and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not because of the servants of the Chaldeans: dwell

king. To what captivity (3) refers it is impossible to say, but the name of Nebuzaradan is connected with it. That the Jews should be transported in batches is only what we should expect, but the low total of 4600 does not agree with the detailed statement of xxiv. 16, and is in itself improbable. Perhaps the writer gives the number only of those whose names were preserved in lists drawn up by the Jews themselves.

22—26 (cp. Jer. xl. 5—9; xli. 1—3; xliii. 4—7). GEDALIAH APPOINTED GOVERNOR. ASSASSINATION OF GEDALIAH.

22. *Gedaliah*] Cp. xxii. 3, note on *Shaphan*. This family as a whole seemed inclined to listen to the warnings of Jeremiah, and to submit to the Chaldeans.

23. *Tanhumeth the Netophathite*] A comparison with Jer. xl. 8 suggests that some words have fallen out of the text, which there reads, 'Tanhumeth, *and the sons of Ephai* the Netophathite.' There was a village in Judah not far from Bethlehem called 'Netophah' (Ezra ii. 22), and there were 'villages of the Netophathites' close to Jerusalem (1 Chr. ix. 16).

Jaazaniah] Called *Jezaniah* in Jer. xl. 8.

the Maacathite] i.e. inhabitant of Maacah, which seems to have been a district of Syria (2 Sam. x. 6). Jaazaniah was therefore of foreign descent.

24. *Fear not because of the servants of the Chaldeans*] Read (with LXX.) **Fear not the passing through of the Chaldeans**, i.e. do not be afraid of the passing to and fro of Chaldean armies in Judah. Nebuchadrezzar was expected to follow the example of his predecessors, the Assyrian kings, and to attempt the conquest of Egypt. This involved the passage of Chaldean forces along the coast road by the Mediterranean and the occupation of some Judaean cities, such as Libnah and Lachish, which lay on the flank of an army marching against Egypt. Gedaliah, however, assures the Jews that they will remain unharmed, if they will remain faithful to the king of Babylon.

The *servants of the Chaldeans* whom the Jews are not to fear would

in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. But it came to pass in the seventh month, 25 that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldeans that were with him at Mizpah. And all the people, both 26 small and great, and the captains of the forces, arose, and came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of 27 the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah

be the officious dependents of Babylon, e.g. the Edomites, whose conduct is described in Ps. cxxxvii. 7. In Jer. xl. 9 a third reading is found, *fear not to serve the Chaldeans*; it is a possible reading, but not likely to be correct. The difference in the Heb. consonants which distinguishes any one of these three readings from the other two is slight.

25. *in the seventh month*] i.e. of the year mentioned in *v.* 8.

at Mizpah] Mizpah was the seat of Gedaliah's government (Jer. xl. 10). It is mentioned as a *rendezvous* for Israel in Jud. xx. 1; 1 Sam. vii. 5.

26. *all...arose*] From Jer. xli. 11—15 it appears that Johanan the son of Kareah marched against Ishmael, and that Ishmael made good his escape. Johanan and the rest made a show of consulting Jeremiah as to their next step (Jer. xlii.), but they rejected his word, and took refuge in Egypt (Jer. xliii. 1—7).

afraid of the Chaldeans] Because Ishmael the murderer had escaped, and they would be unable to surrender him, when the Chaldeans demanded his person for punishment.

27—30 (=Jer. lii. 31—34). THE ADVANCEMENT OF JEHOIACHIN.

27. *Evil-merodach*] In Babylonian, *Amil-marduk* ('man' or 'servant of Marduk,' Marduk being the great god of Babylon). He succeeded his father Nebuchadrezzar in 561 B.C., and reigned less than two years, being assassinated by Nergal-shar-uzur (Neriglissar), who followed him on the throne in 559 B.C.

did lift up the head of] Or, *did accept the person of*, i.e. 'took notice of.' The phrase is generally but not always used in a good sense (Gen. xl. 13, 20). A kindred expression is 'lift up (or 'accept') the *face* of.'

28 out of prison; and he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in
29 Babylon. And he changed his prison garments, and did eat bread before him continually all the days of his life.
30 And for his allowance, there was a continual allowance given him of the king, every day a portion, all the days of his life.

28. *spake kindly to him*] Lit. as LXX. ἐλάλησεν μετ' αὐτοῦ ἀγαθά, 'spake with him good things.'

29. *changed his prison garments*] Cp. Gen. xli. 14.

eat bread] Cp. 1 K. xiii. 19, note.

30. *all the days of his life*] Like Chronicles, the book of Kings ends with a gleam of hope.

QUAECUMQUE SCRIPTA SUNT
AD NOSTRAM DOCTRINAM SCRIPTA SUNT.

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